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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[WANTED.]

FATE OR FOLLY; OR, AN ILL-OMENED MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Lady Violet's Victims," "Lord Jasper's Secret," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST KISS OF LOVE.

Thou to me
Art all things under Heaven—all places thou.

And Sir Richard and her future? Did Clarice pause to think of them? Did no warning note or vague mistrust arise and bid her pause on the brink of the precipice?

Passionate and pale, hot and cold by turn, enraptured and terrified, ecstatic and despairing, Clarice followed her lover meekly along the narrow passage of that modest hostelry about seven miles at the least distant from Scarborough.

Dudley was very nervous. He fidgeted with his rings and chain; he knew that from his way of managing the events of to-day all the prosperity, yes, and safety of his future, depended.

And there was such a thing as hooking your fish and not landing it. Can he rely on Clarice? Can he make her love him with that mad un-

reason of the poet's that never questions—that wholly believes and clings to love's supreme edicts as to the utterances of the supernatural and divine?

Were Clarice to go straight to Sir Richard on her return and tell him she was engaged to Dudley then would he be undone. Investigation, light of any kind, thrown on his past, and Dudley Ivors would be compelled to vanish from the scene. And he had to make her understand that a private marriage would be necessary. He must rely on that untried faith. It was all very difficult; women so often rebelled.

Clarice shivered a good deal as she found herself in the pretty little sitting-room of the inn, alone for the first time with her lover. She did not as yet feel the effects of the shower, for she had thrown a little waterproof cape over her shoulders long ere the storm had spent its fury, and pale as the white bloom of the narcissus, she now leant thoughtfully against the mantelpiece. Dudley ordered biscuits and wine, and insisted on Clarice drinking some. He swallowed off a couple of glasses of sherry himself, and rose superbly to the situation. For the present wooing should suffice.

"Won't you take off your hat, Clarice?" he asked, rising and standing by her side. "I'm sure it must be soaked through with the rain. We shall have to remain here an hour, at the least, if we wish to escape it on our return journey."

For the first time Clarice recollected those who were waiting for her at home. She started as one roused from a drugged stupor, and drew her hand over her eyes, and with the action her black, wavy hair loosened from its braid by the

ride, and always too heavy for the fetters of comb and hair pins, fell over her shoulders in a damp, rippling mass.

The flower in Dudley's button-hole was a good deal the worse for the rain, but he drew it from his coat and playfully fastened it in those ebony locks while he rested one arm round Clarice's waist, and by degrees, and almost without her knowing it, pressed his lips to hers.

"Have you not promised to be my own darling wife?" he cried, as she struggled to escape his caresses.

The joy was too exquisite. Clarice knew she must resist, or love would speedily assume a form of intoxication.

"Yes," she answered, detecting a faint reproach in his tones.

He released her at once, almost coldly.

"If you really loved me, Clarice," he said, slowly, "you would not shrink from my embrace—I, who have loved you too well for my peace."

Clarice feared he was aggrieved, and that she had wounded him. She laid her hand in his and came nearer. All her calmness, her queenly dignity and grace, had vanished. She fancied she must die if he were harsh or scorned her. And then the tears came. Dudley rather disliked the "weeping" form of woman, but he now trusted in her natural weakness of character to save him from the deadly snare awaiting him. He must play a desperate game if he would be free.

"I know it's awfully silly to cry," sobbed poor Clarice, burying her face in her hands, and leaning over the table, "but I've been thinking so much of you for days, and never sleeping I've got quite nervous. And then you seem to

doubt me. It—it makes me wish I—I was dead."

Dudley was on his knees by her side in a second, and her lips met his like flowers nourished by the dew. Is it indeed love that makes her sob on her lover's breast, and vow to serve, obey, and worship him through all eternity? Dudley has almost lost his head, too. They are both equally removed from earth at that moment.

But the man of the world kept his senses tolerably clear through all the torrents and waves of passion. He insisted gently but decisively on the necessity of a private marriage—gave specious and clear reasons for it with the ingenuity that with him was second nature.

He must go away for a time from England, he explained—Sir Richard might oppose the marriage and give them endless pain and difficulty. He also was loth to leave Clarice unwell, for any other suitor to fascinate. Would she trust him with her future? Would she consent to his prayers? Heaven help women when the tongue of an unscrupulous man pleads—when temptation arises and they are led on to their own destruction.

"I ask you to trust me blindly, my Clarice," he said, in his serious, measured way, that would have impressed the greatest sceptic living of his morality and worth. "I shall be able soon to explain everything clearly to you and to your entire satisfaction; but loving you so well I dread delay. Sir Richard may be utterly opposed to all thoughts of your marriage."

Clarice, in her own mind, believed he was. He seemed to hate all Zama's playful allusions to the subject, and, as Dudley shrewdly pointed out, while Clarice shuddered, that Sir Richard was daily visibly declining in health and strength, it would not be worth while to harass or trouble him with their affairs.

"If you doubt my character and respectability," said Dudley, with a magnificent gesture, "ask your Uncle Scratchell what I am thought of. My cousin is Lord Ivora, and I may succeed one day to the title."

Clarice loved him too well to think of consulting her Uncle Scratchell, who she knew was unpleasantly disposed to her.

"I hate the Scratchells," she said, with a charming pout, and dried her tears at their mention.

"Of course, darling, they're dreadfully vulgar. John Scratchell eats peas with his table-knife and dusts his boots with his handkerchief. But what would you? We can't all have ten thousand a year and no encumbrance. And then he's your uncle."

Clarice felt rather ashamed of this relationship. Dudley, with his prince-like air, his exquisite manners, and handsome features, looked down, of course, on the Scratchells, as the friend of the Prince of Ivry and the Spanish Consul would do.

Nevertheless he fattened on their hot roast joints with really touching condescension, and admired the ill-dressed ranks of the little Scratchells through his double eye-glass till Polly, Sarah, and even the twins in cheap brown Holland glowed and felt glorified and transformed by that survey.

"For the present let us only think of the beauty and happiness of our love," muttered Dudley, drinking off the remainder of the pint of sherry with his victor's air.

Clarice was silent. It was all so new to her. These sudden raptures and strange fears were the beginning of another life. She had left her innocent childhood behind her with the pink hawthorn buds and tender lilac clusters at the old Manor House.

CHAPTER XII.

FOR BETTER FOR WORSE, FOR RICHER FOR POORER.

"Tis then we worship falsehood,
Believing it to be true.

DUDLEY did not ride the whole of the way home with Clarice, he judged it more prudent to

be not too conspicuous just at present for more reasons than one. Dudley's many imperfections had been unfortunately brought of late into a very unfavourable light.

He had been playing hide and seek with various people whom he had robbed, but he trusted that after getting Clarice in his power and making her consent to a private marriage, he could induce her to give him a sum of money necessary to stop various ugly gaps in his finance, enable him to throw oil on the troubled waters, smooth down those he had most heavily swindled, and begin life anew.

He wished to turn down or tear out that much blemished page in his past history, and write his name freely and safely on a new virgin folio where no damaging records might be handed down to the admiring gaze of posterity. Our original code is also a somewhat severe one, not of course anything so terrible in its punishments as the Russian tortures in the mines and Siberia—which are far worse than death—still decidedly severe, and Dudley liked to keep the safe side of the hedge.

When he returned to Jubilee Terrace the Scratchells had finished their early dinner, but Dudley was in no mood for dining. He was playing the most desperate game left for a man, but by link was a chain being forged that would drag him down to the lowest depth, and he could only reach light and salvation by a marriage with Clarice that would stave off the dreaded day.

"To be lost for three hundred pounds," he muttered. "And there's so little time left me now. If I run away I'm bound to be trapped, caught, and caught on my return, whereas Clarice and her money—why I'd make her give me some of her jewellery like that and sell it to face there's a raw-will save me from this mockery and jeers of my friends. Heaven save the mark, and a darkness more bitter than death."

"I think she loves me," Dudley mused, walking restlessly up and down the room, "and she's really a sweet little thing—never saw such a docile pigeon—among deers of poetry, compliments, kisses, and I think we shall make a really charming spectacle by-and-by as we walk side by side from the church, but there's danger, risk, and suspense before me ere holy matrimony converts Clarice Heathcote into Clarice Ivora."

He then wrote out various well-selected sonnets, resolved to waylay Mary, tip her hand, and beseech her to give his poems to her young lady just before retiring to rest—poems read on a pillow were so touching.

Mrs. Scratchell, patiently feeding the twins on the shred-like remains of a cold shoulder of mutton, might have been alarmed as to her dashing friend's sanity had she seen Dudley take up a pair of pocket pistols and eye them for a long time in silence.

"If I fail," he muttered, tapping one of their shining barrels, "shall I trust to you who never fail? Yes, better that than the doom which will hurl me amid that terrible flock who are recognised by a number and not a name."

Thoughts of affection and of tenderness mingled with his dreams of Clarice; he loved her as much as a voluptuary can, he meant to spare her all future trouble—he would improve, reform, and make her happy. Sir Richard, if he lived many months, must, of course, be told of it all by degrees, but Dudley believed the master of the Manor House could not last very much longer, and there would be no fear of dis-inheriting his adopted daughter were the marriage kept a secret.

Clarice remained in her room nearly all the remainder of that day, declined to a ball in the evening on the score of a violent headache and went early to bed. She was very restless and miserable, she hated deceiving Sir Richard, but she dreaded losing Dudley still more.

Love came to her as a mighty spell, a great enchantment, and Dudley followed up his victory with all his accustomed skill. It was almost a pity Clarice had not mixed more with young girls of her own age, and learnt to mistrust the

words and deeds of men. She was falling into a great snare.

Sir Richard rarely ever inculcated worldliness in his conversations with Clarice, or, indeed, feared harm might overtake her. If Clarice had one fault above another it was that hinted at by Mrs. Steele—she was inclined to be shy; she rather enjoyed scheming and intrigue; it pleased her to think she loved in secret, and was under the influence of a passion none had ever guessed, and of which Dudley constantly fanned the flame.

At last things came to that miserable pass with Clarice that, what with her lover's caresses, prayers, threats, and coaxings, she consented to a private marriage. Pale and breathless she hung on his words—how could she bear to lose him, for Dudley spoke vaguely of going abroad did she persevere in her mistrust. Again and again he rehearsed his most specious arguments, and at last he was rewarded as he desired.

Sir Richard and Zama had been called away for a day or two from Scarborough; he wished to consult an eminent physician who had come over for a month from Germany, as to his state of health, and Dudley, hearing of this, seized the opportunity presented of urging his suit. Clarice was left alone with her maid in the nominal care of Lady Rankin, who with her husband had just arrived, and thus everything promised to go more smoothly with Dudley than he had dared to hope.

He had made all the necessary arrangements for their being privately married at a small church in the identical village where was situated the inn in which they had sought shelter the day of the storm; the faithful Mary had been taken wholly into her mistress's confidence and would be the one witness necessary.

Mary Dunce was true to the core, and Clarice had ample proof of her affection and fidelity. She entered heartily into the proceedings. Clarice and Dudley seemed both fond of flinging their money about just now, and as Mary silently reflected:

"If the quality 'ave their own ways of going to work, what's that to us?"

Nothing at all—provided it paid—and she could keep a still tongue. Clarice's wedding morning did not look propitious. As she rose from her bed at six o'clock, drew aside the blind and looked out below, whispers of ill-omen spelt in the storm-driven clouds, and hoarse murmurs of the sea, if she had only cared to listen. Heavy clouds drifted across the sky, the sea was fierce and sullen, angry waves lashed the shore—but to Clarice's excited mind and imagination these portents suggested no dark dread of coming sorrow; she was agitated, of course, but even these emotional thrills of fear were pleasant, and no real dread of the marriage being an ill-omened one took any deep root in her mind. No mother's voice had been ever lifted to warn or guide the girl; she had had once a bitter experience of poverty and she longed to be loved. Poor Sir Richard, sad and contemplative by nature, could not understand that craving for excitement, change, and a more passionate and intense form of life which besieged Clarice. The loneliness and seclusion of the Manor House had made her also somewhat morbid.

But it was an occasion for tears as well as rapture, and Clarice had at last a fair pretext for weeping. She cried quietly for about an hour, and then feared her features would look swollen and puffy, and that Dudley might be disappointed in his bride's appearance.

At seven o'clock Mary appeared with a cup of tea on a tray for her young lady, having just left one outside Lady Rankin's bedroom door, and little did that estimable lady dream of what was going on above.

"Don't cry, dear miss, it'll spoil your eyes," said the maid, quite cheerfully; "a wedding isn't a thing to weep about, and he's a beautiful gentleman and loves you from his very 'cart, I'm sure."

"But how can I be happy, Mary, when I'm deceiving dear, kind Sir Richard?"

"But then, miss, you're no real kith nor kin

of master's—what would be perhaps a sin in a daughter ain't one in a stranger—is it?"

This logic had its effect; Clarice sipped her tea and thought of the lover waiting for her at the village church, and rather enjoyed the romance of the situation. She had been a sort of frozen girl, or ice spirit all her life, before Love's fires had changed her destiny, and her love had grown to be a somewhat unreasonable emotion.

The time dragged slowly on ere Clarice began to dress. She wore a dark brown silk dress trimmed with handsome chenille; a little brown hat with one crimson rose that just touched her black tresses; the colour burnt brightly in her cheeks; her eyes were liquid and soft with love.

Dudley had secured a splendid ally in Mary—he encouraged and supported Clarice in every possible way, and the faithful maid was rather thankful than otherwise to get her young lady away in the cab without a scene. Dudley appeared singularly cool and self-possessed.

"Oh, my darling, I know you would not fail me," he cried, taking both Clarice's little hands in his.

Clarice could not speak for trembling. The clergyman having now arrived the ceremony now proceeded quietly, and the words were solemnly pronounced that made them man and wife.

Dudley breathed freer, as if relieved from some deadly weight. Clarice had behaved beautifully, her nervously sensitive nature only showed her sweet womanliness, and now to leave the porch, get rid of Mary, and drive quickly away to the quiet sea-port town which would be the holiday resort for to-day.

No wedding breakfast, no speeches, no guests, none of the bright paraphernalia of marriage—only a few hours of ecstasy together, then a brief parting, peace, safety, and a future blessed by wealth and love. A very nice programme, indeed, if things will only work in well. But will they?

"My wife," whispered Dudley, his features quivering with real feeling, "my sweet Clarice, all mine, this proves your trust in me, beloved—trust that you shall never regret; my whole life shall be passed in securing your happiness."

They have walked a few hundred yards down the road by this time, Mary is out of sight, they are alone beneath Heaven's canopy—husband and wife—for better for worse. But why does he start and turn pale, why he seized with that awful dumb trembling which even Clarice—in her present exalted state, perceives? Why that look of horror on the face of this man she has married?

Can he escape—or is it too late? Two men come slowly forward and one is taking those terrible bracelets from his pockets. Dudley sees the game is up, that Fate has been altogether too strong for him. Clarice clung to him in pitiful terror, she flings herself into his arms, calling him every tender name—her darling, her love, her husband.

"Yes, you're trapped right enough," said the officer, holding him fast. "It's bad for the young lady."

"Great heavens! is there no escape now?" gasped Dudley, reeling backward.

"Sorry to say so, my man, you'll get fifteen years for this if I don't mistake."

A piteous shriek fell from Clarice's white lips, she tried to push the men off, her eyes were wild and flaming. Dudley, bending over her, whispered:

"I shall be for ever dead to you, my Clarice, and I will never claim you—even if I do live to come out of—Poor child, I won't do you that harm."

He muttered some more scarcely intelligible sentences, and she clasped his hands and clung to him and looked in his face with an anguish that even moved the hearts of those who had come for him.

"I have sinned against the law," muttered Dudley, "but none need ever know that you are my wife. Heaven bless you. Farewell, Clarice, farewell."

And she watched him depart and wondered why she was not mad.

CHAPTER XIII.

A BREAK IN THE CLOUD.

Love's holy flame for ever burneth.
From Heaven it came—to Heaven returneth.

THE Indian had again baffled his pursuers. He and Lillian were many miles from Rome before the moon rose, when the detective again sought their dwelling, and, after passing a few days in Tuscany, they left Italy for good, travelled through Spain, and then went to Arabia.

Rupert Tresilian found one day a little note in Lillian's handwriting addressed to him and hurriedly informing him of her departure, and the young man made up his mind then and there that he would see her again. Leave this girl whom he felt so deeply interested in without making one effort to rescue her from her uncongenial lot?

Impossible. He could not work for thinking of her—could not content himself with painting from memory pictures of her fair young loveliness. His "Margaret" was indeed the best representation of Lillian, and, strange to say, it had been purchased by Sir Richard when in Rome.

"What ails you, Tresilian?" the sculptor Valleria asked, in his good-natured way. "Your group does not progress very rapidly. Are you longing to return to your native land—are you a victim to some unaccountable nostalgia?"

Rupert smiled and threw down his chisel. He was wondering whether Aida would ever awake to an intense realisation of life as it existed—would ever be aroused like that statue of King Pygmalion's to a consciousness of love. She had beautiful thoughts, she was half a poet in feeling—he had seen her reading Shelly, Byron, and Keats in the old deserted garden when he had flung her his offerings and waited for a smile.

"I believe, Valleria, that I'm in love," he said, lightly.

"That's rather a morbid state of feeling, isn't it? And your muse, my young Egeria?"

"I care more for little Aida than is consistent with common sense. Yes, Valleria, some spell draws me to her still. I can't work or study or think but I see that fair classic head and the down-drooping eye-lids, and they confuse my senses. Isn't she the divinest vision that ever gladdened a man's sight? The clusters of that golden hair, the arms, too perfect almost for even sculpture to do justice to. Aida is like a flower in her girlish grace and loveliness."

"I daresay in reality she's frightfully commonplace—eats fruit in her spare time, and goes to sleep all day in the sun, and with no more soul than Gallathea when she was mere marble," said Valleria, shrugging his shoulders. He was past the romantic age, and youth's emotions are often almost beyond the comprehension of the middle-aged. "Go home to your beautiful castle, my dear Tresilian," he said, tapping Rupert's arm, "put yourself into severe training, listen to your excellent mother Lady Tresilian's worldly counsels, and fall in love with the latest beauty of the season, and if all this doesn't cure you, why write a book and make Aida the heroine. You'll have had quite enough of her before the end of the third volume."

"By heavens, I believe you're right, Valleria. I sit here and dream all day of the child, and the air and the climate and the surroundings all favour romance too much for prudence—these crimson roses, with their deep green leaves, remind me of the day I drew one over her hair and painted her for the first time. A fever is in my veins, Valleria, my heart aches to behold Aida again."

"Go home straight," said the sculptor, "and do as I suggest. This restlessness is a very bad sign; you'll be making an idiot of yourself if you run after Aida."

And even as Rupert nodded his head, as if in approval of the sculptor's suggestions and pro-

phesy, he was resolving that Arabia and not England should be his destination. Return to Crawley Castle and be snubbed by Herbert, his elder brother, and be bored by Lady Tresilian's worldly jargon, with Aida all the time exposed to the cruelties of the world, and worse still, at the mercy of the Indian—no, never!

This he swore while Valleria looked at him wistlessly, pitied and understood him. Is not memory "the sight of the heart?" Rupert's mental vision ached to again behold Aida. He had seen her tears; he had listened to the terrified pleading accents with which she at times addressed the Indian; he had no power to arrest these memories. Love had, indeed, stolen into his veins with its devouring, fatal power.

He was anxious also to study Moorish art, which was in itself a living poem. So when he had arranged his affairs in Rome, and said farewell for a time to his friends there, Rupert set out for the Moorish village named by Aida in her note. Perhaps he might find her still there, and if not, he might be able to discover some clue by which to trace her.

It was a village round which were several small farms and vineyards, and when Rupert arrived, after a long but interesting journey, he heard a young voice singing a Mauro-Spanish song about love and wine that set his pulses beating. But the voice was not Aida's. Rupert sighed and passed on. Then he met some ancient-looking Arabs mounted on iron-grey bars.

Guns rested on their bows, and one carried a stick presented to him by a supposed saint to preserve him from robbers. They were strange, picturesque-looking people, their slipped feet armed with spurs on which was some Arabic writing, for the spurs had been blessed by the saint.

Over the mountain passes and amid thick, shady forest groves Rupert journeyed, dreaming of Aida. As he entered the village in which he hoped to find her a marriage festival was going on, and here splendid scenes met his view for future delineation on canvas. Grapes, melons, and flowers were displayed on rustic benches, and curious drums sounded. Moorish girls were dancing in their fanciful costumes to the music of a guitar.

He saw rare artistic treasures before him, and felt, in this old and wonderful land, greater artistic power and finer inspirations. The warm, fragrant air, the clear sky, the sunny mountains, were indeed suggestive of the highest beauty, and with his strong and vivid imagination Rupert gloried and revelled in the change, while the hidden hope of finding Aida increased.

Lillian never for one moment imagined that Rupert would ever set out in search of her, and since leaving Rome she had suffered terribly. The Indian had been more than ever irritable and peculiar. It seemed as if he could not bear the girl from his sight for a moment, and Lillian's health began to fade.

She had grown used to her life of misery and depression before she met Rupert Tresilian, but since hearing his low-breathed words of love a great restlessness attacked her, a sort of hidden revolt against Fate. She could not sleep at night; she lost her appetite. She would sit for hours wrapped in thought, while the Indian, whose span of existence was drawing to a close, laid on the couch in a sort of semi slumber, partly caused by weakness and partly by opium.

One day Lillian was standing at the little window of the farmhouse where they were staying, and which overlooked the vineyard, when she saw Rupert pass slowly by. Djalma slept heavily. She thought she might dare to steal out across the grassplot ere he awoke and speak to Rupert. She had watched him with sudden ecstasy, her lips parted, her breath coming quickly, for instinct told her it might be she he sought.

Lillian threw a light lace fichu about her head and glided softly from the room. Shades of twilight were gathering. It was a warm, lovely evening; clouds swept above the mountains, and some Arabs on horseback galloped swiftly by.

She plunged into the thicket foliage, and at the sound of her footsteps Rupert suddenly paused and turned.

Ah, yes, it was Aida, paler and thinner than when they had last parted. Love's keen eyes perceived the unmistakable change that had taken place in her since he had seen her reading her favourite poets in the old Roman garden. For a second neither spoke, but their hands were closely clasped and intertwined, and there was a deadly pallor on Lillian's cheek.

"Aida!" he cried, his lips quivering as he drew her closer to him. "I could not live without seeing you, dearest, without knowing if you were well and happy."

"How good you are to me," she murmured, too overwhelmed with joy at finding him near her again to wonder if the Indian might wake and call for her.

"Good to you, Aida. It is useless to disguise the truth from you any longer. I love you; I care for you so much that I only think of your welfare."

He paused and pressed her close to him. A passion of tears burst from Lillian. She hid her face from him; her body quivered and shook. She was forgetting to be patient and endured. A great rebellion was taking the place of her former passive suffering. With her love had come emotion and a certain element of tragedy. With it she felt she could look unmoved on death were Rupert but by her side. His will would be her only law.

"And have you thought sometimes of me, Aida?" he asked, in his lover's voice, bending over her, and moving aside one golden tress.

"Always," she answered, lifting her head.

His lips met hers in a long embrace, and Lillian forgot that the Moorish twilight was deepening into night's shades, and that the moon would soon arise above the mountains. It seemed as if they were both back again in the sculptor's palace, that enchanted region where faint, soft music sounded, and the fountains' splash mingled with the harmonious rapture, and they had sat silent in the hot, fragrant hush of the Norman room.

"We left Rome so suddenly," she said, after a pause, when Rupert gazed at her tenderly, and framed her sweet face between his hands, "and we have travelled in many lands since then."

"Who is this man who claims you?" Rupert asked, in a low voice. "Were you born in India?"

As he spoke a soft, cat-like step sounded through the thicket, and Lillian started and trembled. A thin hand was outstretched and rested on her arm. It was the same hand that had torn her from her father's home and love, that had slain her mother. Was it destiny? The Indian stood before her and motioned her away; but her gaze was fixed on Rupert, and Djalma understood from his answering one that Lillian would never more be alone in the world, or utterly at his mercy.

"Trust me, Aida," murmured Rupert. "I shall watch over and defend you by night and by day as long as strength and life are mine."

He lifted her hand to his lips, and kissed it reverently. She had never heard a mother's voice—no loving breast had pillowed her young head to rest—but it seemed to Lillian at his words that every tenderness, every joy, were at last hers. The world was no longer winter; it was like a lovely garden, full of fairest flowers, and both lit with eternal sunbeams.

(To be Continued.)

A MOTHER'S REMORSE.

"My hopes are dead. My life is a failure. I am the unhappiest of women."

Thus mused a sad-faced woman as she walked through a beautiful park in one of the pleasantest of our many small cities. Her face mirrored her thoughts. There was a tragic look in the depths of her dark eyes and a sorrowful curve to her lips. Yet she was

dressed tastefully—even with some pretensions to elegance. She had a comfortable home. She had never in all her life wanted for food and shelter. And skipping along by her side, buoyant with health and happiness—his warm, velvety, smooth hand in hers—was a beautiful boy of four years, her very own. And yet she thought herself the most miserable of women.

"God is unjust," she thought. "To some he gives everything. To me he has given nothing."

The child looked up in her face.

"Are you going to cry, mamma?" he asked. "Don't I love you?"

She scarcely heeded the words; scarcely listened to the sweet, clear tones. Yet she loved the child; was a tender mother. But his words brought no comfort to her. She still continued to nurse her gloomy thoughts. The child finding her an unsocial companion, broke away from her, and ran along in advance—the joy of his innocent heart breaking forth in singing and merry laughter.

"Once I was as merry and as light-hearted as he," thought the mother, as she listened to his merry outburst, "but now laughter is almost a stranger to my lips. And no wonder; for my life has been nothing but disappointment, nothing but failure."

Was this woman a chronic fault-finder, or had she cause for her complaints? She thought she had. Her life was not what she had planned it to be. She had been an intellectual, ambitious girl. Early in life she had made a grand mistake. She married a man of whose character and disposition she knew little—attracted by his prepossessing exterior and easy off-hand manners. Most girls have a desire to essay matrimony, and many of them mistake a passing fancy for love, as Leora Mayne, of whom I am writing, did.

She discovered her mistake in good time; discovered that there was not a thought, not an aspiration, scarcely a feeling in common between her husband and herself. Intellectually and morally, he was her inferior. The fancy she had felt for him soon died. His affection for her was no deeper or more lasting than hers for him. Harshness and neglect had long since taken the place of caresses and endearments.

It was after her marriage, after her hopes of a happy home had failed, that the young wife essayed to win for herself a place in literature, and failed, as so many do. The obstacles to be overcome are so many, the prizes are so few, the contestants for them so numerous.

Domestic unhappiness and disappointed ambition, these were her troubles. They are troubles not to be lightly esteemed; troubles which have driven many to despair, to death. But this woman had her child, her beautiful boy, full of health and promise. He was hers, to love, to train, to cherish. Of his love at least she was sure. Mamma was the dearest object in the world. And yet she had said, "God is unjust. To some he gives everything. To me he has given nothing."

The sweet, soft air fanned her brow. The trees waved over her head. The laughter of her child was borne to her ears, as he bounded on before her. Suddenly his laughter ceased. He tripped and fell, striking his temple upon the stone coping which surrounded the pond in the centre of the park.

She hastened to him. Already a crowd had collected around him. She looked at their horror-stricken faces, and gave a sharp cry of anguish. She knew the truth, even before her eyes fell upon the ghastly, marble-like face. Her boy was dead; stricken down in the fullness of health and beauty by one blow.

"Oh, God!" she cried, "I am justly punished for my ingratitude, but how can I bear it?"

They bore them home, the dead child and the fainting mother. Years have passed. Leora Mayne has attained the object of her ambition—recognition as an author. Crushed flowers yield sweetest perfume. Some birds sing best under torture. So it was with her. The songs which the world applauded, whose pathos made

them weep, were wrung from a bleeding, aching heart.

Often when walking forth in the sweet summer air—alone now, always alone—she remembers that day, that last day, when she walked forth with a little hand clasped in hers, with little feet bounding gleefully along at her side. She remembers, with bitter remorse, how unhappy she was that day; how little she valued the treasure that God had intrusted to her keeping.

"How blind, how wicked, how ungrateful I was," she cries. "Oh! if once more I could feel the clasp of my child's hand; if once more I could hear his merry voice, once more clasp him to my bosom, I would ask nothing more. I would resign all else, and be the happiest of women."

Oh! mothers rich or poor, high or low, whose children play around you, healthy and happy, their little hearts full of love for you, prize your blessings. Do not look upon them in the light of cares or hindrances. Do not, whatever your troubles may be, feel that you are utterly miserable—that you have nothing to be thankful for—while you have one little heart to love you, one little soul to train for Heaven. May it require no sharp and severe dispensation of Providence to teach you how large a part of your life's happiness is centred in your little child.

A. E. D.

DIDST EVER LOVE.

HAVE you studied your innermost heart,

Unravell'd its depths, part by part,

In search of its long hidden lore?

Have you looked there, in moments of leisure,

In quest of its long-buried treasure?

Have you searched it quite deep to the core?

If you have, did you e'er feel a pain,

Unaccountable? Still did remain

A pang that you ne'er felt before?

If you have, that is love in its youth,

And you'll soon feel the force of its truth

When in age it grows stronger and more

Then you'll find, if this love is returned

Your heart sweet repose will have learned

And the pain will have ceased with its cure;

Then your life will be happy and bright

As the bird on its swift, airy flight.

And all will seem joyous and pure.

But you'll find, if your love is alone,

And another's you never can own.

What a drear earth this is to sustain;

You may hide this sad sight from the world,

But sweet peace from your life will be hurled,

And that pang in your heart will remain.

H. M. G.

THE building of the new Eddystone Light-house is now making rapid progress, and the work achieved this year already exceeds that done last year. Two-thirds of the solid base of the structure is now brought up to within three feet of high water mark during the spring tides, and the work will shortly be less dependent on tides and weather.

THE London Swimming Club has come opportunely to the front again, just as the perilous season commences. That excellent society is able to boast of having taught 10,000 boys and girls to swim during the last five years. They do "all for love and nothing for reward," and the amount of benefit they confer is incalculable.



[A NEW MEETING.]

HER HUSBAND'S SECRET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Frank Bertram's Wife," "Strong Temptation," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PRETTY LADY.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer.
TENNISON.

THE telegram which it cost the Earl of Fairleigh so much time and trouble to compose was very short. It ran as follows:

"LORD FAIRLEIGH. To Mrs. Ward, Fairleigh Court, Blankshire. I leave London tomorrow with my wife. Write to Post Restant, Paris. You had better keep the news from L. F."

It was a strange message for a nobleman to send to his servant; a strange thing so to occupy a husband of a few hours as to induce him to leave his wife alone, but then the earl was not quite as other men are—a shadow lay on his life, and at times pressed heavily on him; the burden of a secret which sometimes weighed him down.

The message was vague enough. Telegraph clerks are proverbially the least curious of humankind, or this one might have wondered at the earl's despatch. Doubtless Mrs. Ward would understand it. To the uninitiated it was bewildering.

What news was she to keep from L. F., and who was L. F.? The only news we can think of was Lord Fairleigh's wedding, and the initials L. F. would have described his wife,

only that she was in London, far away from the picturesque home of the Vanes, and from the dominion of the faithful housekeeper.

When he had paid his shilling, Lord Fairleigh left the office quickly with the air of a man who has just got rid of a disagreeable piece of business. He sprang lightly into the hansom.

"Spartan Street, Notting Hill," was his next order; "and drive as fast as you can."

It was more than two years since the last visit we paid to Spartan Street, but the quiet thoroughfare was but little altered, though certainly No. 9 individually had a greater look of prosperity than on the summer morning when Mrs. Clive answered A. Z's advertisement.

Rich autumn flowers bloomed in the boxes before the windows. The steps were of a spotless white, and the servant who answered the door was a decided cut above the damsels who performed that function generally in Spartan Street.

"Is Mrs. Clive at home?"

"Yes, sir; will you walk in?"

She ushered him into the front room and went to call her mistress. No need for her to ask the stranger's name. He had paid several visits to the house in the last two years, four or five at the least, and Susan had not forgotten receiving as many half-crowns.

"It's Master Bertie's papa, ma'am," she announced, without any hesitation, "and I think he's in a great hurry, because the cab's waiting."

Mrs. Clive was upstairs turning over a pile of childish garments which were in want of repair. She smoothed her hair and adjusted the folds of her widow's cap in a minute. Then she was ready.

"You had better call Master Bertie in from the garden, Susan."

Hugh, Earl of Fairleigh, shook hands with the gentle widow, who never guessed his title, and performed so fully a mother's part to the child he had confided to her. She noticed that he had gone out of mourning since his last visit,

and also that he looked worn and anxious. For the child's sake she took a keen interest in the father.

Money difficulties, she knew, did not trouble him, and she wondered what made the handsome face so grave and thoughtful. How surprised she would have been if anyone had whispered to her that this was his wedding-day, and he was the happy bridegroom of one of the fairest girls in England, who loved him with all her heart.

"I am an unexpected visitor," he said, after a pause, "but I had no time to write and tell you I was coming."

"Indeed, we have been expecting you. When you were here in May you promised Bertie you would come soon."

"And I have not forgotten it, but unforeseen circumstances—"

Here he stopped abruptly, thinking of Rosamond and the change she had made in his whole life. Why when he was here last he had not even seen her. Then he added with a visible constraint:

"How is the child, Mrs. Clive?"

"Very well and happy. You will like to see him at once."

She had risen to ring the bell, but he intercepted her.

"In a minute or two. I have a few things I should like to mention to you first."

She resumed her seat, but he was so long before he spoke that she began to feel alarmed. Surely no trouble was coming to her little charge.

"I am about to leave England, Mrs. Clive, and I have no notion when I shall be back."

"This was certainly the last news the widow had expected."

"I hope no trouble is calling you away," she said, kindly. "Perhaps you may return sooner than you expect."

He shook his head.

"I am going for pleasure chiefly, but yet there is trouble in it, for I must leave my child. You know how entirely I trust him to you."

Will you do this one thing more for me, and keep my memory green with him while I am away?"

"I will never let Bertie forget his father," strangely touched by the solemnity of his manner. "Of that you may be sure, Mr. Clive, but I hope your absence may not be so long as to render it possible."

The earl smiled sadly.

"Whether I am in England or abroad, I fancy the result will be the same. My boy will grow up with more affection for you than for me, Mrs. Clive, and I cannot blame him. He will not see me. No one can understand that if I seem to neglect my son it is for his future benefit."

"He is so young yet," returned Mrs. Clive, "that if you were away three years he would only be eight years old, young enough to transplant all his love to a new home."

"He will never have any home but yours, Mrs. Clive, until he is a man and makes one for himself. I am anxious while I am away that he should not make acquaintance with my relations. I have none near enough to possess a disinterested affection for him, but there are a few distant ones who, if they came across the child, might be disposed to flatter him as my heir. Now could you—would you—"

She was puzzled at his evident embarrassment.

"I think you need have no fear; Bertie is only five years old, you know. I doubt if he remembers his own name, except that it is Bertie."

"That is just it. You have given much to my boy. Will you give him one thing more—your name? As he grows older and goes to school it may shield him from many a slight. Until I can claim him, will you let him be known as Bertie Clive?"

Of all requests this surprised Katharine most. She could see no motive for it. The child was a rich man's son; his heir, as the father had just stated. Why deny him his own name. For a few moments she was silent. Every instinct of her nature objected to the deceit, but on the other side she loved the boy dearly.

As present he knew nothing of his parentage, he called herself and Marion "Auntie," and Mr. Clive "Papa." His name had never been mentioned in their little circle; if she parted from Susan it need never be guessed that he was not her nephew. As the father said, it might be better—Katharine knew well that a child with no visible relation seldom fares well among his fellows.

"I do not think it wise," she answered, at last, "but I am quite willing to do as you prefer."

"I shall never forget your kindness."

She rang the bell then and Susan brought in the child, a pretty little fellow in a braided-suit of summer cloth, a noble looking boy worthy to have been called by the title which was in very truth his own, Viscount Vane.

Mrs. Clive rose and would have left the father and child alone, but the former by a glance asked her to remain.

"I am going away for a long time, Bertie," he said to the little fellow, "what shall I send for you to remember me by?"

"I shall not forget," answered the boy; "but when will you come back?"

He stood leaning his curly head against his father and looking up into his face. There was but little resemblance between them; Bertie had but few of the characteristics of the Vanes beyond the clear, open forehead and the firm mouth. There was a foreign touch about his beauty, especially of his glorious eyes, but as he stood there looking up with precocious thoughtfulness into his father's face, he was a child any man might have been proud of, and yet the sight of him always brought a bitter pang to the earl's heart. He loved the boy and yet he was to him his keenest source of sorrow.

"I don't know," replied the earl, with a strange, sad recollection that his absence or return could make but little difference to his child

—that Bertie would have no place in his stately home; "not for a long time, I think, dear."

"Christmas is a long time, will you come then?"

"I think not. You must be a good boy, Bertie, and mind all Mrs. Clive tells you, and then when I come back I shall be so pleased."

The child's face grew grave as his own. At such moments as these for those who could read it, the likeness between the father and son grew stronger.

"Shall I be quite big when you come back?" was the next question.

"Perhaps," wondering in a dreamy sort of way what would be the boy's destiny when he was quite big, and how he could befriend him, and yet never betray the relationship between them. "I may have, my little lad, but I shall think of you often, Bertie, and wonder what you are doing."

"Are you going in a big ship, papa?"

"Yes, in a big ship to a country far away, where they talk French—some day you must learn French, Bertie."

"Are you going all alone, papa, won't anyone go to take care of you?"

The words brought back to Hugh the thought of the one who was going with him, not to take care of him but to be cared for. He looked at his watch, it was half-past six, the cab had been waiting an hour almost.

"I must be going, Bertie, won't you tell me what I shall send you from Paris, a gun or some soldiers, which shall it be, my boy?"

The child was playing with his watch chain and had taken up a plain gold locket.

"What's in here, papa? Do show me."

Lord Fairleigh would probably have refused, but the little fingers had pressed the spring and the locket flew open and disclosed the face of a beautiful girl, with soft brown hair and large, tender hazel eyes. Mrs. Clive could not help seeing the vexed expression of Mr. Clive's face; delicacy prevented her looking at the face, she guessed it to be that of Bertie's dead mother.

"Oh, the pretty lady!" cried the boy, appreciating as children can the rare sweetness of the face. "Papa, I would like this for my very own."

The earl closed the locket hastily: it contained a photograph of Rosamond Keith taken before her illness, and he was anxious that Mrs. Clive should not see it.

"I'll send you a locket just like this one, Bertie. I mustn't let you have this because it was given to me."

He kissed his son, shook hands warmly with Mrs. Clive and went out to his cab.

"Auntie," asked Bertie, when they had watched his father out of sight, "do you think papa will remember?"

"I am sure he will, dear."

"Cos it wasn't the gold thing I wanted, auntie, it was the pretty lady."

"Was the pretty lady mamma, Bertie?" and even as she spoke she thought what a useless question it was to put to a child who had lost his mother at three years old.

"Oh, no," replied the boy, shaking his head very decidedly. "Mamma was black, this lady was so pretty. I think, auntie, her face must be like the angels."

A week later a handsome locket arrived at Spartan Street, but there was no portrait inside it, and little Bertie pushed it away regretfully.

"The pretty lady was what I wanted, auntie, don't you think I'll ever see the pretty lady?"

And the question set Mrs. Clive wondering.

CHAPTER XIV.

ONCE AGAIN.

Let the dead past bury its dead. LONGFELLOW

It is not so very far from Spartan Street to Charing Cross Station, and when persons are only spending one night at an hotel they are not expected to dress for dinner, for Lord Fair-

leigh was in plenty of time for the *recherché* repast he had ordered.

It never occurred to him that the secret he was hiding from his wife could reach her from any other source: before that evening in the firelight, when he had learnt her love, he had told himself over and over again he had no right to marry, but the temptation was too strong for him.

He, with his shadowed past, had married a young girl in the heyday of her beauty, and he loved her with a passionate intensity too deep for words. The earl would have borne anything for Rosamond's sake if he might have suffered by her side, he could not have exiled himself from her presence.

He told himself all would go well of the few people—perhaps, three in all—who knew the truth not one would be likely to have access to the young countess. She was his wife, she would be his good genius, his bright guiding star, and no one should come near her to tell the secret he had so carefully concealed. In her presence he hoped to forget the troubles of his youth; surely her love would be balm for all.

And yet, as he sat opposite her, his thoughts would stray to the modest little house he had just left, and the child who had so admired the "pretty lady." How Bertie would have loved his father's sweet young wife had he only been allowed to see her.

Such thoughts as these kept the earl rather silent, but Rosamond was too weak from her recent illness to observe it. Besides, they were naturally reserved; even from the first a wonderful calm had existed in their courtship, as though each trusted the other too entirely to make protestations or exact promises.

Rosamond was with the man she loved best in the world, who already held the place of home, friends, everything, in her heart. This day she had received the right to be at his side for ever, and she was happy. She never thought of wondering where he had been that afternoon, or yet of attributing his silence to those two hours of absence.

There are some natures—and surely they are of the élite—too noble to suspect, who, once having given their trust, trust on until the end, too true themselves to doubt others, too great to notice petty things. These characters are rare enough; they suffer much when they awake to the truth, but surely they are preferable to the miserable, fault-finding, sceptical, distrustful, temperament which is their opposite.

Rosamond Keith had married the Earl of Fairleigh knowing he had suffered deeply, and that in time that suffering might also touch her. He had not chosen to give her his full confidence; other girls might have weighed every minute occurrence carefully—remembered why, how, and by putting all together have found out what was kept from her; but for such a course, we repeat, Rosamond was infinitely too noble.

"Our last evening in England, dear," her husband said, fondly when the table had been cleared, and they sat on the sofa, his arm round her, her head leaning against him.

"Where are we going, Hugh? Do you know it's very strange, but I have no idea."

"To Paris first. I thought we would stay there for about a week, and then go on to the south."

"I shall enjoy it very much."

"There's nothing so pleasant as having no fixed plan. We will wander through Bordeaux and Marseilles, then perhaps we'll cross over and have a peep at Africa. So long as you get well and strong, Rosamond, it does not matter how many months we stay away."

"We two stand quite alone, Hugh. How strange it is neither of us have a single relation in the world. We must be all in all to each other, dear."

"How little I thought, when I went down to Aston, what I should find there. Ah, Rosamond I shan't let you go wandering about the world any more. I must take good care of my queen."

"You have found a new name for me, Hugh."

"I like a name that no one else uses. Rose is the queen of the flowers, and you, dear, are queen of my heart."

"I like my kingdom," shyly.

She was very glad he did not call her his blossom or his garden flower. Lady Fairleigh would always have painful recollections connected with these names.

"Rosamond, would you like me to buy a place near Desmond Towers, as you said you had been so happy there?"

"It would cost a great deal of money, Hugh, and you said we were poor."

"Not now, my queen. We have more money than we need now. It is in the future we may be poor. Say, would you like a home near your old haunts?"

"No, I should not mind if I never met the Desmonds again. Besides, Hugh, I would rather our home should have no memory for me apart from you."

"Rosamond, did you know him there, the man you were to have married?"

"Yes."

Lord Fairleigh nearly asked, "Who was he?"

The question hovered on his lips, but he was too generous to put it. Rosamond read his anxiety on his face: "Strange, but he never once thought of Sir Reginald Dane."

"Dear," she said, simply, raising her clear eyes to his, and looking into his face with the artless purity which belongs only to little children and good women, "dear, do not think of him. If I had married him I should have been unhappy, for when my trust died, wife or no wife, my love would have died too. Hugh, believe me, my heart is all yours."

"I believe it, darling. I trust you as I do myself. When we are back in London you may meet him. I shall have no jealousy. I can never like the man, but that will be because he deserted his betrothed, not because I fear his influence over my wife."

"I wonder where we shall be by this time tomorrow?"

"In Paris, I expect. I want to buy you some jewels in Paris, Rosamond. Lady Fairleigh must have some more rings for her thin fingers, than the gold one which is the emblem of her fetters."

She took his hand in hers, and looked quietly at the little finger where he had been accustomed to wear his wife's wedding ring. It was no longer there. Lord Fairleigh saw the glance and understood.

"It is put away with other memorials of her. You know, dear, she died before I became Lord Fairleigh, so that she never had any of the family heirlooms. I am glad of it. I may be superstitious, queenie, but I should not care for her to have worn anything that will be yours."

To his surprise her clear eyes filled with tears.

"My darling, what is the matter?"

"I was thinking of her. She must have been so unhappy. Hugh, it seems to me you almost hate her."

"She blighted my whole life," he answered. Everything she touched, every place associated with her, pains me."

"Did she ever go to Fairleigh Court?"

"Never."

"It is your home, isn't it, Hugh? Are you very fond of it?"

"Not as a residence. It is a grand old place, and I am very proud of it. The Venes have lived there for centuries."

"And some day you will show it to me, Hugh?"

"Some day my queen shall see her palace, and I think she will say it is a fine one."

"Did you ever live there, Hugh?"

"I was born there, strangely enough. My uncle was the earl then. He had two sons. No one ever thought of my coming in for the title. But there is an old superstition in our family that no one ever becomes master of Fairleigh who was not born at the Court."

And it came on him then with a sudden flash

of memory that this proverb would tell against his boy. Bertie had been born in a little white stone cottage near Florence, where vines clambered over the walls and the sky had that deep intense clearness only seen in Italy.

The next day the earl and countess left England; they travelled with all the luxury wealth could command. Rosamond's maid and Lord Fairleigh's valet were both experienced servants and well used to foreign ways, so that all trouble was taken off the bride's hands. Without effort or exertion of her own she found herself installed in a charming suite of apartments in the Champs Elysées, and every day Hugh drove her to see some of the lions of Paris.

"What are you looking for?" he asked, merrily, one morning, when he came in and found her studying the supplement of the "Times." "It's no use your examining the advertisements, Rosamond. You are no longer an eligible reply to any of the 'wanted's; you have accepted one situation, and that's enough for any young lady."

"What situation?" laughing.

"That of my wife."

"I was looking for our wedding, but I cannot find it. Perhaps it was in yesterday, and I missed it."

The earl laughed a little awkwardly.

"Really, Rosamond, I don't know what you will say to me. I quite forgot to have the announcement written out and sent to the papers; it never came into my head."

She smiled.

"That was strange. Why, Hugh, no one will know we are married."

"Oh, yes, they will. Mrs. Granville will spread the tidings far and wide. To tell you the truth, my queen, I don't regret it much (the omission, I mean), for I am not sorry to keep my wife to myself for a little."

It was a very pleasant honeymoon. This is the period when if a man has made a mistake he generally finds it out; but Lord Fairleigh found out nothing. He loved his wife after three months of her constant society just as much and just as intensely as he had loved her before.

If there were faults in Rosamond he could not see them. He worshipped her. To save her sorrow he would have made any sacrifice, but he was jealous—jealous while he knew he had no shadow of cause. He could not bear a stranger even to admire his beautiful wife. How would he get on when he took her home and she became one of the acknowledged beauties of the London season?

He resolved he would not give himself that trial yet. For the present she should not appear in Belgravia. The winter had passed. Rosamond was as well and strong as she had been before that night's wanderings in the wood. There was no longer the slightest cause for uneasiness, and yet Lord Fairleigh lingered abroad.

His wife was not averse. For her where he was was happiness. If she had any lingering regrets for her own land she did not show them. She went where Hugh took her, and enjoyed the sunny land of France and its delights thoroughly. She did not even utter a protest when they went on to Germany, and the earl decided they would spend the summer at Baden.

They were at Baden for the anniversary of their meeting. Together they recalled the first month of their acquaintance, living over again the marked avoidance which had been really but the beginning of love; then when the summer was waning and September had come round once again, bringing their wedding-day, it seemed to Rosamond that the crown and seal had come to her happiness in a little child. It was a boy.

Rosamond was delighted because it was an heir. She cared little for riches and honours for herself; she did care for them intensely for her child, the little viscount, the future master of the Court. She rejoiced as only mothers can in the grandeur that encircled her firstborn.

It always seemed to Rosamond that her husband never loved the child quite as she did.

The girl-wife attributed this to his intense affection for her, which made him regret that anything else should draw away even a part of her attention; but really Lord Fairleigh's feelings were very different when he held the unconscious infant in his arms, and each time when he heard the servants talk of the little lord and thoughts would come of that other child in Spartan Street; the boy who would never forget him; the boy who had taken a stranger's name instead of the one which was his birth-right. They were both his own children, the little viscount in his lace-trimmed cradle, and the deserted boy in Spartan Street. But what a difference in their fate—in their future position.

"I ought never to have married," thought Lord Fairleigh, sadly, one morning when he had left his wife tying up her child's sleeves with blue ribbon on which was embroidered a viscount's coronet. "I have done them both a cruel wrong."

No one but himself knew how earnestly he had hoped that his second marriage might be childless, or that only daughters might call Rosamond mother. He could not dislike the helpless baby who looked at him with his wife's clear eyes, but the coming of that little life entangled the net of difficulties which beset him still more intricately.

He need not have troubled—need not have passed hours in agonised doubt. Before the Christmastide had come; before the tiny viscount was three months old, he and his mother were both laid low. Then the earl forgot everything in his anxiety for his wife. He felt he could bear anything if only she was spared to him. She nearly faded out of life and left him a widower for the second time. Nothing but the greatest skill, the most untiring nursing, saved her. Then on the last day of the old year, after protracted uneasiness and many sleepless nights, the doctors told him the countess was out of danger, and the same evening her baby died. They had saved her; they could not save her child. Hugh wondered sadly as he followed the little coffin to its last home whether the death of his second son was a just punishment to him for his treatment of his firstborn.

Rosamond grieved bitterly for her baby. Short as its life had been, she had built many castles in the air with the unconscious infant as its hero. The void in her life seemed as though it would not be filled, the gap as though nothing would close it. Even her husband's love was powerless to make her forget her child.

They left Baden and went to Italy. They spent the rest of the winter at Rome, and Hugh showed her all that was most beautiful in art and nature. Rosamond tried to seem interested. He was very patient and tender with her, but he went the wrong way to work. He was always trying to divert her mind and to distract her thoughts. He forgot that grief must have its way.

"Shall we go to England?" he asked her at last, when he saw that the sky of Italy had ceased to please her. "Shall I take you home, darling, and see what our native land can do for us?"

And with more light in her eyes than he had seen there for many weeks she answered:

"Please, Hugh. You are very good, but I should so like to be in England once again."

He wrote immediately. His house in Park Lane was got ready, and in a few days he and Rosamond landed at Dover. They had led such a retired life abroad that few people knew of their whereabouts, and many even ignored the fact of the earl's marriage until they read in the fashionable papers that Lord and Lady Fairleigh had returned to England after a prolonged tour.

It was early in May, and the season had fairly begun. A duchess presented Rosamond, and at once invitations flowed in to parties, balls, &c. The countess was a welcome guest to all. Every tongue spoke in praise of her beauty. Ladies admitted that she was captivating; men wondered where the earl had discovered such a treasure.

The larger, broader life, for which years ago she had longed, had dawned for her at last. She was in society, and of it, too. The child Rosamond, the lonely girl at the rectory, was one of the loveliest and most attractive women of Belgravia.

Lord Fairleigh was very proud of her popularity. He trusted his wife implicitly, and the demon of jealousy slumbered for awhile, only he watched her face when any stranger was presented to her, and strove to read if it was the lover whose perfidy had left her free to be a countess. He never fixed on any man as the one. He waited, he watched, but he never had a suspicion.

People of his own sphere openly congratulated him. They told him his wife was the fairest, most gracious Lady Fairleigh they could remember. It is very seldom a man's marriage gives such entire satisfaction as Hugh's.

One evening he went into his wife's dressing-room, where she was preparing for a ball. Her maid was clasping the Fairleigh diamonds on her neck and arms. The soft brown hair had now grown long again, and was coiled round the shapely head. The white dress was trimmed with costly lace. She looked every inch a countess.

"My darling," he said to her, when the maid had left them, "do you know you look like some fairy. You are so daintily lovely I cannot believe you are quite mortal."

He kissed her fondly, as though to make sure. Rosamond never forgot that night. The first faint breath of the storm which was to convulse her whole life rose then. She often thought afterwards in looking back that it was from that evening she could trace her troubles.

They went that evening to a ball given by the Duchess of Meath. It was one of the most brilliant affairs of the season. The rooms looked like fairyland. The most beautiful women, the noblest men in London, were there, and among them Rosamond moved as queen, the admired of all beholders, the belle par excellence of that gay throng.

She did not waltz. She had never cared much for the pastime, and Lord Fairleigh specially objected to it. For all other dances her programme was full before she had been half an hour in the room. Hugh watched her dance with a pleased eye (he himself rarely patronised the exercise), and then strolled away to make himself agreeable to the wall-flowers generally. Her eyes bright with excitement, a delicate carnation flushing her soft cheek, the countess was in the height of her triumph, when the duchess came up to her with a gentleman whose face she did not see.

"I have brought you a suppliant, Lady Fairleigh," said her grace to her beautiful guest. "An old friend of mine who is longing to dance with you."

She made the introduction in due form, but her grace was old and spoke very indistinctly. Rosamond was really not listening, and the gentleman was too excited to catch the words. As she turned to him with a bow she met his gaze for the first time, and she recognised Sir Reginald Dane, her first love.

Her first love! Although her whole heart was her husband's, although she had given herself away for all time, and did not repent the gift, yet her thoughts flew back to the time when this man had been all in all to her. For one instant her lip faltered, then she took his offered arm.

"It is a waltz," he said, simply. "We will sit it out."

He led her through the ball-room to the conservatory. Then he placed a chair for her, and bending down, said, with the old tenderness in his voice:

"My darling, if you knew how I have sought you! Mr. Ashley would not help me, but for nearly three years I hunted England through. The last few weeks I have been abroad. I never found the least clue till to-night. I am at last successful."

"Sir Reginald," asked the countess, "have you forgotten you must not speak to me like this?"

"You thought I cared for nothing but money, Rosamond. I was obliged to care for it, but I cared more for you; but now I am rich, and nothing can bar our union."

"Sir Reginald, I think you are mad," came from Rosamond's white lips. "Five minutes ago her grace introduced us. Have you forgotten that?"

"I have forgotten everything save that you promised to be my wife."

"And losing the money you expected I set you free. For nearly two years, Sir Reginald, my name has not been Rosamond Keith."

"Not married?" he cried, hoarsely. "Not married, Rose."

"Hush!" earnestly. "You must not call me that. I have been married almost two years. See," as the glass doors of the conservatory opened, "here is my husband coming to look for me. Sir Reginald, shall I introduce you to Lord Fairleigh?"

(To be Continued.)

THE MOTHS.

A WORD in season is the one that tells. This is not the month for moths, but it is getting so far along towards the time when precaution should be used that in giving them now many will be saved the trouble of writing to know what to do with their robes, furs, etc. As strange as it may seem, we meet with intelligent persons who do not understand the changes in insect life. All should know that we have first the egg, then the larva—a kind of caterpillar, maggot, or grub, something of the worm kind; this then goes into the pupa, or chrysalis state, remains quiet a while, then comes out as the perfect insect—either butterfly, moth, beetle, fly, or whatever its kind. In the clothes-moth it is the larva or caterpillar that does the mischief; its perfect form is popularly known as the "moth miller," and in due time will be seen flitting about the house. Now, the trouble arises from allowing the parent moth to deposit her eggs upon or in the fabric, which afterwards furnishes the food for the young worms. Prevention is thus seen to be the important remedy. Hence various things that are distasteful to the mother moth, and not injurious to furs, woollens, etc., are in frequent use to keep the moth away. Of such are camphor gum, cedar shavings, pepper, tobacco, etc. But the best and surest method is to put the goods away in a place—a box, barrel, or even paper bag—where the moths cannot enter, and pack the goods in it before there is any chance for the eggs to be laid.

THE STUPID BOY.

NEVER set a boy down as stupid because he does not make a figure at school. Many of the most celebrated men who have ever lived have been set down by some conventional pedagogue as donkeys. One of the greatest astronomers of the age was restored to his father by the village schoolmaster with the words:

"There's no use paying good money for his education. All he wants to do is to lie on his back on the grass and stare at the sky. I am afraid his mind is wrong."

Scientific men have often been flogged for falling into brown studies over their books, and many an artist of the future has come to present grief for drawing all over his copy book and surreptitiously painting the pictures of his geography. Your genius, unless musical, seldom proves himself one in his childhood; and your smug or sufficient piece of precocity, who takes all the prizes, and is the show-scholar of the school, often ends by showing no talent for anything beyond a yardstick. Sir Walter Scott was called stupid as a child, and it was not considered to his credit that he was fond of

"sic trash" as ballads, and could learn them by heart any time. That boy who worries you by being so unlike his bright brothers may be the very one who will make you proud and happy some years hence. Take that for your comfort.

CHOICE OF A HUSBAND.

I COULD not, writes a lady, love a man a little my superior. I should detest my equal—I should despise my superior; although I conceive an assemblage of qualities in a man of no great strength of mind that could win my regard; and, perhaps, if I were called upon to cherish and protect him I might cultivate a certain degree for him—a kind of motherly sentiment. I have thought it all over a hundred times. But the man for me to love is one vastly my superior, not so much in accomplishments, nor even in intellect, but in irresistible force of character; a man who will compel my spirit to bend its knee to his; who will command my soul to stand still, and shine on him as Joshua commanded the sun; who can trample my will to the dust beneath the tread of his irresistible and indomitable energy and fixity and courage. I require he should make me worship and fear him; and that instead of guiding and protecting me, should master me. I want that he should conquer the domain of my soul, add it to his own, and then generously divide the sovereignty between us.

PATIENCE OF LOVE.

ONE principle endures while life lasts in woman's heart—her capacity for loving. Love in one form or another makes up the beauty of her life. It enters into all she does. Any work outside her immediate circle is undertaken most often from pure desire to help someone else, to know something of the mysterious happiness of love. Unlike the men, women chiefly look for personal intercourse with those for whom they are working. If their interest lies among the poor, they are desirous of sympathetic acquaintance with them; and very little good work of a lasting kind has been done by women without their own influence of love being brought to bear on the individual case. The strength of women lies in their hearts. Without dwelling on the greater physical weakness of women in general, it is a fact that their brains are more easily deranged, and unless they change greatly they are apt to deteriorate in essential womanly qualities if thrown much or prominently before the world. They are seldom fitted to rule, emulation and jealousy being generally strong in their character, while their feelings and judgments are rapid in the extreme. But while the heart is true, hopeful and courageous, their powers for good are not weakened.

WORK AND LIVE.

MAN was put into the world to work, and cannot find true happiness in remaining idle. So long as a man has vitality to spare upon work it must be used or it will become a source of grievous, harassing discontent. The man will not know what to do with himself; and when he has reached such a point as that he is unconsciously digging a grave for himself and fashioning his own coffin. Life needs a steady channel to run in—regular habits of work and of sleep. It needs a steady, stimulating aim—a tendency towards something. An aimless life cannot be happy or for a long period healthy. Even if a man has achieved wealth sufficient for his needs he frequently makes an error in retiring from business. A greater shock can hardly befall a man who has been active than that which he experiences when having relin-

quished his pursuits he finds unused time and unused vitality hanging upon his idle hands and mind. The current of his life is thus thrown into eddies or settled into a sluggish pool, and he begins to die. When the fund of vitality sinks so low that he can follow no labour without such a draught upon his forces that sleep cannot restore them, then it will be soon enough to stop work.

IMAGINARY LOVE-LETTERS.

An unmarried woman lately amused herself by writing anonymous love-letters to a great number of men, married and unmarried, in the town in which she lived. Each man undoubtedly fancied himself the favoured object of the affection of the fair unknown. These men concealed the blissful secret, and would have kept on looking for the fair writer until this day, if the lovelorn damsel had not betrayed herself by writing similar letters to women, married or otherwise. No reasonable woman could long conceal her being drawn into such a complication—no woman of ordinary sharpness could fail to discover the writer.

The men had dawdled over the matter in their rough and stupid fashion. Some of them, especially they who were married, thought it a fine thing to receive love-letters from a stricken creature; and others laughed to think that graces and manly charms should have attracted another heedless butterfly of the softer sex. But when the women became personally interested in the affair they went to the bottom of things in twenty-four hours. Women excel men in wanting to know all about things, especially mysterious things, and in finding out what they want to know.

WHY HE BROKE HIS ENGAGEMENT.

GAMBETTA is a bachelor; but he has not lived so long without having at least contemplated marriage. The story of his engagement to an heiress in western France, and its sudden breaking off, gives us a fresh glimpse of his character. From the time of leaving his humble home at Cahors, till his rise to the highest rank of public personages, Gambetta lived with a faithful, loving, devoted aunt, who had followed him to Paris, and who made everywhere he went a pleasant home for him. She was at once his maid-of-all-work and his congenial companion; and he was as deeply attached to her as she to him.

His engagement to a handsome and accomplished heiress was a shock to the good aunt; but she yielded gracefully to the inevitable. When the arrangements for the marriage were being discussed, however, the young lady took it into her head to make it a condition of their union that the aunt should be excluded from the new establishment. She was scarcely elegant enough to adorn gilded salons. Gambetta explained how much his aunt had been to him; the rich beauty was only the more obdurate. Gambetta took up his hat, and with a profound "Adieu!" said he, "we were not made to understand each other." And the marriage was put off for ever.

A boy stood an umbrella in a church porch. To this umbrella was attached a strong cord, one end of which the boy held in his hand. Eleven different persons carried the umbrella to the length of the cord when the service was over.

High prices have often been paid for the paintings of celebrated artists, but never before has the sum of two million francs been offered for two works. This is what M. Meissonier will receive, as per engagement, for executing two large panoramic canvases, seven metres long by five metres wide.

CECIL'S FORTUNE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SYREN.

A syren with dark, evil eyes,
Who makes a human heart her prize;
Who loves to hear the sobs and sighs
Of those she spurns.

HENRI DE ST. GERMAINE, by some chance, happened to observe his wife's pale, agonised young face just at the moment when he was about to bid adieu to Madame von Fitte and the ugly little novelist, Monsieur Pierre, and the thought struck him:

"It is, after all, a trifle too cruel; she begins to love me, she is dutiful, she has forgotten the secretary. Unfortunately, that just at this moment I am more madly, desperately in love with this fascinating, enchanting, diabolically handsome Victorine Sala than I have ever been before in the whole course of my existence. Kate is like a lily of the valley, Victorine is a glowing crimson rose, rich as velvet, bright as sunshine, fragrant as the spices of Arabia. I never before found the woman who could chain my will, enthrall my senses, rule my soul, and inflame my blood as this one does. Yet, all the while, Kate is, I know, a gem of innocent purity, and a real love for me is growing in her heart—I read it in the blue, sorrowful eyes. Yes, let me be kind to her if I can."

Acting on these thoughts, which flashed through his mind with the rapidity of lightning, the marquis turned with a smile to the Baron Plomb.

"I am going to ask you to allow me to rob you of all your guests," he said, "not only of Mademoiselle Victorine, but also of Madame von Fitte and M. Pierre. You had better all remain and dine; we have a very good chef de cuisine, and there are fine wines in the cellar of the chateau, some of which I have bought from the owner of Bronté through his steward at Geneva. Now, will you all stay and dine and pass the night? I can't hope to induce you to prolong your visit, baron, for you have a host of friends at home; but the others may, all the three others, may they not?"

"They must please themselves," said Baron Plomb, bowing; "but, for my part, I must return to my friends."

And it ended in the old baron taking his departure, leaving all his three friends as visitors to the marquis.

"So that now, Kate, you will not be in the least lonely," said the marquis to his wife, "for Madame von Fitte is a most entertaining woman, and Pierre is one of the cleverest men in France, or, indeed, in Europe; it is not only as a novelist that he has distinguished himself; his scientific articles in the first magazines of the day are the admiration of Paris, London, and Berlin. He is a believer in the science of astrology, and could read your fortune in the stars if he knew the time of your birth. He is a most interesting person, I assure you, and I invited him because I knew he would amuse you, ugly as he is," added the marquis, with a laugh.

Kate was sitting, pale as a lily, on a low-backed chair, and Pomfret was plaiting and binding up the golden hair. Kate's lips moved, but she did not speak; her lord had entered her dressing-room on his way to his own. Dinner would be on the table in less than an hour.

"Pomfret," said the young marquise, quietly, "I can finish my toilette myself; you may go."

A deadly scowl contracted the brows of the firewoman, and the marquis saw it; something struck him all at once, what he thought a peculiar and fantastic and chance likeness between his wife's maid and the French actress who had enslaved his soul.

"Just as a bit of glass cut in the same way may resemble a diamond of the first water," he said to himself; then aloud, "Pomfret, are you afraid the marchioness will not dress herself to advantage?"

"My lord," said Pomfret, with her hard smile, "my dear lady is at times so careless, and assort her colours so ill, and there are guests, and I wish my dear lady to be acknowledged as the most beautiful woman in Switzerland."

"Or, at least, in this Chateau Bronté," said Kate, with a sudden flash in her blue eyes; "we will leave Switzerland to take care of itself in that particular. If I can reign in my own house and in my husband's heart," she added, when Pomfret had closed the door, "I shall be content."

In answer he took her white hand and raised it gently to his lips; only a month ago he would have caught her in an impassioned embrace to his heart if she had made such a speech, and Kate felt the difference keenly as only a wife can feel these things.

"You are very good and wisely, my dear," he said, "but you must look cheerful and entertain your visitors, and try and get back some of your colour and spirits; that is the way to retain your empire, my little queen."

The marquis smiled and looked very pleasant and good-natured, but Kate's hungry heart could not be satisfied with this; she yearned to throw her arms about her husband's neck and ask him to take her to his heart as in the old days, some two months past when she became his bride, but there was a coldness in his kindness that chilled her, and drove her to thoughts which she had forbidden her mind to occupy itself with—thoughts of Cecil Renfrew, his sad, noble, dark face, his impassioned ardour, and his frantic love for herself. Could any wealth atone for the loss of such a love as his?

"I would be cheerful, Henri," said Kate, "if I could, but I am not well just now, you leave me so much alone."

"I will fill the chateau with guests," he interrupted, quickly.

She shook her head.

"It is not that I want, Henri, it is more of your society. We have not yet been married three months, and it seems that you are tired of me."

He broke into a little mocking laugh, moved further away from her, and finally went to the window, which commanded a fine view of the mountain, with the red light of the dying day glorifying it with an unearthly splendour; but Henri saw nothing of that daily miracle of the pomp and majesty of Nature—he was thinking of the wicked black eyes and red lips and round, white shoulders of Victorine, which would soon be uncovered when she appeared in the splendour of dinner dress.

"You cannot expect a husband to keep up from everlasting to everlasting the character of a sighing Stephon," he said; "if you do expect it you'll be disappointed."

Then Kate's spirit rose.

"Make yourself content, marquis," she said, with some disdain. "I will not expect it; your words have taught me a lesson."

Her tone was bitter and full of anger and pain, and Henri, who knew that he intended to pain her more and more, sensitive and naturally jealous as she was of the actress Victorine, he saw no way out of the difficulty save that of a cold, armed neutrality. He was determined to spend as much time as he possibly could with the actress, Victorine Sala. If his wife liked to be jealous, if she chose to be miserable, he was not the man to deny himself for her sake. Tired of her?

Yes, for she was pale, delicate, sad-eyed, reproachful; he hated ailing women. Some day, if it ever did happen, which seemed impossible now, that he grew tired of Victorine, and if Kate were still as lovely and as fond of him as she was now—well, who could say, they might still be happy together, when she had presented him with a son and heir. But for the present there was only one woman in the world for him, and that was Victorine.

It will be seen that at this time Henri de St.

Germaine harboured no especial evil scheme towards his wife—he did no more than many a man or woman in society does every day in the whirl of the world. He went on his own way, selfish and reckless, caring nothing if he broke the heart and blighted the existence of the woman whom he had sworn to love and cherish all the days of his life; but no real idea of actively destroying her or causing her ruin had as yet even dimly dawned on his mind.

It was reserved for others to plant with fiendish hands evil seeds in a soil but too ready to receive it.

"If I have taught you a lesson, madam," he said, with another of his short, harsh laughs, which somehow irritated and wounded Kate's heart fearfully—"if you have learnt a lesson, I only hope you will not forget it. I tell you very plainly that I have always done exactly as I liked in this good world, and I always mean to do as I like. At present Mademoiselle Sala, the first of Parisian actresses, she who visits as an equal at the courts of kings, has condescended to accept my invitation to remain in this grim old chateau, and if you do not behave to her as a hostess should, you had better go elsewhere until—" He paused to clear his throat; Kate listened with a face white as death for his next words; she looked on the ground, she would not look at him, she only wondered in a dim sort of way how much further he intended to carry these insults—"until Mademoiselle Sala leaves," said Henri.

He, too, was pale and angry, and his eyes flashed.

"I do not intend to give up my place to this woman," said Kate; "if she behave ill she must go, not I."

"Ha! you threaten, my lady, do you?" cried the marquis. "But, as I said before, I am master of every house where I pay the rent and the wages, and so I am master here, and Victorine shall not go until she chooses or I choose."

"You forget that I have a father who will see me righted," said Kate.

The poor child suffered so keenly, and her physical strength was so small, that she had no self-command; she could not restrain the hot words which came to her lips. The marquis hated her at that moment—most husbands become furious if their wives threaten them with the interference of their relations.

He uttered a curse between his close-shut teeth, and left the room, banging the door loudly after him. Kate walked to the window and looked out upon the mountain now wrapped in the purple shadows of the autumn night.

"My life is finished," she said, "just when it had begun. Henceforth my great resolve to be the very best wife in the world is a useless one. How can a woman be a good wife to a cruel monster like yonder man? Henceforth I tear him out of my heart, I trample on my foolish love—was it ever love—like this?"

As she spoke she took a small blue flower from her breast, flung it on the ground, and trampled on it.

"But I will show no further anger," she said, presently. "No, I will be calm and cold, polite and mocking. I will do the honours of this grim chateau, which I am beginning to hate, like any queen. I will speak to Henri with the odd politeness of an invited guest; day by day I will sit by his side and speak to him as a stranger might. I will ignore her, I will pass her as if I saw her not; I will punish her with the veriest disdain. I will seek amusement in books, in flowers, in walks, in drives. By-and-bye, in London there will be the season and its triumphs. I will not call Pomfret, I will dress myself."

Kate bound up her hair and wreathed it with snowy flowers. Stephanotis and white camellia and one single red rose she wore at her breast. A necklace of diamonds, clasped by a great ruby, encircled her white throat. Her dress was white-glistening silk, with crimson satin sleeves and square cut crimson satin front. Thus in mingled snow and fire she looked like a pale and lovely queen of the land of enchantment, fairy lore and romance.

The white flowers on her head were arranged

like a coronet, and gave a something regal to the young superb head held aloft with such a stately grace. As for the guests, Victorine still blazed in the black satin and gold, but she had wound gold-coloured asters in her dark hair, and thus with her great golden necklace clasped by that magnificent yellow topaz, she seemed like a goddess of wealth, a female Plutus, and endowed with a mystical and wicked beauty.

Now those yellow asters shone in her black hair; now the yellow topaz gleamed. How strangely her eyes glittered when Kate took her place at the head of her table. Victorine said to her evil heart:

"I will kill her; I have made up my mind to that. She is perhaps ten years younger than I am, but that is nothing. I am of the constitution that preserves beauty deep into middle life. At past fifty I will—aided by cosmetics—contrive to fascinate men, but yonder girl of eighteen will develop into an irresistible woman if she is allowed to live under even tolerably placid and comfortable conditions. She is a slender, fragile creature now; at six or seven-and-twenty she will have the form of a Juno added to her face of a Madonna, and she will not only fascinate, but command reverence—and—in due course she would even win back this husband by means of her dignity, gentleness and the calm power of her intellect. She does not guess herself at the half of her own cleverness. If she were only as old as I am, and if she knew as much of the world, she would outwit me. Fortunately she does not; she will fret and pine; I will make her do that. Then she will make herself disagreeable to her husband, either by outbursts of virtuous indignation, or by a course of dignified silence which will irritate him against her so that he will begin to hate the very sight of her. Then we must throw temptation in her way, and if that fails, and if it is necessary I will kill her with my own hand. I never have killed anything but a dog, the dog of a fellow actress whom I disliked, and I never felt a pang of pity or remorse when the dying creature fixed its eyes on me. I was never found out; it was supposed that some tramps had strangled the dog in his kennel, where he was found dead in the morning in the yard of the hotel in the town of Rouen, where our company was staying, whereas I had got up and killed the creature in the night. How strong my hands are, white and slender as they look; and I should feel more pleasure in killing that creature in her glistening robes of white and crimson satin, her fair, flower-crowned head, her melancholy blue eyes, than ever I felt in killing Marjory's white dog!"

Thus Victorine thought all the time that she was feasting on the entrées and roast pheasants, the pastry and creams and jellies with which the chef de cuisine had supplied his master's board. Victorine was clever with the unscrupulous, daring, utterly selfish cleverness of an adventurous man of the world.

We say man; for in most respects, her character was masculine. She had that intense selfishness which, rightly or wrongly, the fair sex are apt to regard as the especial male vice. One often hears good sort of women say, "that the best of men are selfish," that "it is impossible to meet with an unselfish man."

Now Victorine was most diabolically selfish; she was a self worshipper; pity and kindness she regarded as the veriest weaknesses. She was a very lucky person. Hitherto all she had touched had turned to gold. Utterly incapable of friendship herself, she yet possessed many true and staunch friends. She knew how to fascinate both men and women, and to make even women anxious to please her and win her approbation.

Already she had saved, what with gifts and theatrical successes, a small independent fortune. Her health was perfect. It was her boast that she had never suffered with so much as a headache in all her life. This woman did not talk very much. She was too languid, too idle. She smiled approval or came in now and anon with a word of repartee that set the listeners in a roar.

Kate felt that in doing the honours at her own table she was quite eclipsed by this wandering bright and evil star which now cast its lurid light over the smoky of her home. Monsieur Pierre, seeing that the marquis was devoted to the actress, and since the young marchioness appeared gentle as a dove, devoted himself to her.

Kate found the ugly little man talkative, clever and amusing. When she rose to leave the room he followed her, as did Madame von Fitte; but when Kate entered the large quaint old drawing-room, with its polished oaken floor, rich rugs, carved cabinets, and queer recesses filled with priceless china and lined with faded precious pictures of the old masters, she was amazed to find that positively Victorine had remained with the marquis over his wine in the dining-room. She looked in some astonishment; she thought that she must have made a mistake, and that shortly Victorine would enter the room.

"Does not Madame la Marquise sing?" demanded Monsieur Pierre.

"I sing," Kate answered, "but I am not inclined to-night."

The novelist sighed. "She is worth ten thousand Victorines," said he to his heart, and straightway he fell over head and ears in love with the unsuspecting and beautiful and most unhappy Kate.

Henri Marquis de St. Germaine was indeed a man resolved to do exactly as he pleased, and now it seemed that he was pleased to set the world at defiance and to neglect his bride of three months in the most open way.

Kate tried to bear up bravely, to act as if she did not see or hear what went on before her eyes, and what was spoken in her presence. The marquis positively passed whole days without exchanging with her more than the merest monosyllables.

After breakfast he and Victorine went into the library, or the billiard room if the weather were wet, and the rains set in early that autumn, or if it was fine they wandered off together into the woods, or ordered a small carriage and drove out, these two, only to see the views, or else they went in the boat on the lake—always together, these two; the very servants murmured aloud, foreigners though they were.

Monsieur Pierre studied the whole affair from an artistic point of view as material for his next novel, and signed as it were at the feet of Kate, who in her misery scarcely noticed his presence, while Madame von Fitte laughed and then said it was a scandal. Both she and Pierre continually now spoke of Victorine to Kate as "that dreadful woman," but Kate only smiled faintly.

She said not one word to these strangers about the grief that was silently eating her heart out. She grew pale and hollow-eyed, and her young beauty faded, as the days followed the days, and Victorine, whose abundant luggage had long ago arrived at Chateau Bronté, still remained an unwelcome guest in the home of the young wife.

CHAPTEE XXIV.

THE WIFE.

But prayers would nothing for a while,
And who could stand with fealty
But the house was lone and the piercing screams
Could reach no human ear. KIRK WHITE.

"I CANNOT bear it any longer; I will not bear it any longer; I have done wrong to bear it so long."

Lady Kate spoke aloud, unconscious in her excitement that she had done so. Pomfret was pinning up her hair. It was a bright, summer-like, warm day at the end of October. Positively, the infamous Victorine had been at the chateau now six weeks.

Where Kate sat she could look through the window of her room right into a thickly planted portion of the grounds, and there in a miniature lane, between hedges of late flowering shrubs, were the two persons who of late occupied all

the thoughts of the young wife—Henri the marquis and Victorine the actress.

Victorine wore a white robe trimmed with mauve-coloured ribbons, and a thick scarf of silk of the same bright tint was crossed like a fichu over her chest. On her head was a white lace morning cap trimmed with mauve. The mixture of warm tinting and white, the handsome, vivacious olive face, the graceful head, the slender, graceful form as Victorine leant in a studied attitude over a little gate leading to another part of the garden, the handsome, fair-haired marquis, the surroundings of the trees and shrubs, with the great mountain background—all formed a picture brilliant and charming, and to Kate maddening. Yes, she positively saw her husband take the hand of the actress and raise it to his lips.

"I have borne all this quite long enough," said Kate again.

"Quite long enough, lady," said Pomfret, as she gave the finishing touch to Kate's hair.

Kate looked at her bitterly.

"And I have not a friend in the wide world," said the young creature, clasping her hands; "not one. I have written to my mother, and the answer she gives me is cruel and devoid of sympathy. She says I must be weak and foolish to have allowed such a person to remain in my house a day, that if I had the least tact I could make her leave. That as for Henri, he is like other men of the world, and that if once I succeed in banishing this woman I must never inquire into his conduct when once she is out of my house; but that I am indeed a bad manager not to be able to keep my house to myself. Oh, what a heartless woman my mother is. I will go away if I can't turn yonder woman out."

Pomfret's eyes glinted.

"I should in your place," she said. "I could not put up with all that you put up with."

Kate rose to her feet. She was too wise to trust Pomfret now with her plans or her secrets.

"Kindly give me my dress," she said. "I have made up my mind."

Pomfret frowned.

"Is she going to demand a separate fortune and establishment?" she asked herself. "That will not suit us; she must be made to drown herself, or to compromise herself, or someone else must drown her. We must get rid of the Marchioness of St. Germaine. I would leave, madam, if I were in your place without saying a word to anyone," said Pomfret.

Kate looked at her gravely.

"I am not quite so silly," she said.

Pomfret cursed her in her heart.

"We shall have to kill her," she said, "and that will lead to suspicions and to complications."

Kate attired herself in a loose flowing robe of black silk relieved with plain white collar and cuffs. She would form a contrast with her golden hair, sombre attire, and fair pale face to the black-haired, olive-tinted, smiling, plump woman in white and lilac. And Kate left the room, and went down the wide staircase of the chateau, having fully made up her mind.

"Yes, I will speak to her as one woman to another," the young marquise said to herself. "I will tell her that she is doing a deadly and wicked wrong in taking up the whole of my husband's attention. I will ask her if she cares for her own fair name, which ought to be so precious to every woman."

For even six weeks residence in the same house with Victorine had not taught unworshipful Kate that it was absurd to judge a woman like the "Sala" by the same standards as she judged herself. She entered the breakfast-room; the table was covered with dainties and gay with flowers.

Monsieur Pierre rose to offer her a chair, bowing to her with the deep respect and admiration he really felt for her goodness and her loveliness. She thanked him with a faint smile and extended her hand to Madame von Fitte, who advanced with a smile to meet her.

"The others," said the singing lady, "are in

the gardens taking their usual stroll. Ah, madam, dear madam, I must speak at last. I can no longer hold my peace. I have told my friend, Monsieur Pierre, that I intended to speak to you plainly. The marquis is mad. That wretch must have given him a love potion. See how they sit together and converse in whispers the whole of the evening, or else he hangs over her while she touches the piano and plays only a few chords, for she knows not how to play. I never in all of my life saw anything half so bold."

"I have made up my mind, madam," said Kate, calmly. "I mean before the day is over to speak to mademoiselle."

"Ah, ha!" cried Pierre, and the little novelist clapped his hands. "Now that is well, and you, madam, have spirit; when you once begin you will tell her to leave!"

"Yes," Kate answered, "I shall tell her to leave—I shall say that as the mistress of the house I have a right, a perfect right, to choose my guests, and I shall desire her to leave my house this very day."

Madame von Fitte and Simon exchanged glances, and at that moment came a sound of merry voices on the lawn outside the window, and immediately there entered the marquis and the actress. Victorine was radiant as the roses which filled her strong white hands.

"See what a bouquet we have gathered for your drawing-room, madam la marquise," she exclaimed, with a careless inclination of the head to Kate.

Seldom during those strange autumn days did these two women exchange words; Kate, indeed, never spoke to her shameless rival unless compelled to do so. A stately inclination of the head or chilling smile were all she accorded, and, oh, how Victorine hated her for this cold reserve.

"Thanks," said Kate, coolly. "The footman will arrange the flowers after we have breakfasted. Antoine has great taste in the arrangement of flowers."

And Lady Kate gave one glance at the glowing, piquant beauty of Victorine; the woman seemed the very incarnation of health and strength, joined to a lissome grace and elegance.

"And I," said the sad young wife to herself, "I am like a white flower beaten down by the rains, while this blooming yellow tulip—I will not call her by a lovelier name—flaunts at my side."

The party sat down to the table. Victorine ate enormously, as was always her custom, and she talked and laughed loudly, and fed a large white hound, which belonged to the chateau and was a favourite of Kate's, with pieces of cold game and toasted muffins; and then she asked for wine—Victorine never fancied that she had breakfasted unless she finished up with a large glass of Burgundy.

"Now, come," she said, springing up at length, "I want to go for a drive to-day to see the ruins of the convent of St. Natalie; there is such a romantic story about her: she was a wicked actress—like me—and she led a merry life while she was young, and then founded a convent when she was old and wanted to make the best of both worlds, but she had an enemy, a woman who was very jealous of her—ah, what will not a jealous woman do?"

As Victorine spoke she wheeled about and fixed her evil, brilliant eyes on Kate, who shrank away as if scorched by their glare.

"Well," continued Victorine, "this woman, who hated poor Natalie, who was now a handsome, grey-haired, elderly woman, the abbess of the convent she had founded—what does this enemy do but she sets fire to the convent one very stormy night when the wind was up and set dead against the convent, and very few of the nuns escaped with their lives. Natalie herself was burned to ashes, so she was canonised as a martyr, and they say the ruins are most delightfully picturesque. I am going there for a drive with the marquis. And, marquis, tell the servants not to forget to pack plenty of tongue and chicken sandwiches in the carriage, for we shall be famished; and that burgundy is famous,

rich as old port. Tell them to put three or four bottles in. I have a box of cigarettes which arrived yesterday from Madrid. We shall have a jolly time, you and I, and oh, let us take those black horses; they spin along so delightfully, and look so deliciously wicked."

"Pardon me, mademoiselle," said the young wife, with dignity, "can I have a few words with you?"

"But certainly, Madame la Marquise," Victorine answered, throwing back her superb head and flashing a terrible flash from her black eyes upon Kate, "And where, pray, is this interview to take place?"

"Wherever you like, mademoiselle," Kate answered, with a cold smile, for by a supreme effort she had regained her composure, though she was deadly pale and trembled terribly—"either here, or in my private boudoir, or in the garden."

"In the garden, by all means, madam, if the choice is left to me," said Victorine, boldly. "I love the fresh air and the bright sunshine. In the garden, by all means, let us hold this interview. Shall it be at once?"

Oh, the insolent hardihood, the brazen smile, the hollow, glittering, cruel black eyes. How Kate hated them all. She bent her head and led the way towards the garden. It happened that the marquis had just quitted the room before this little colloquy took place. Thus there were only M. Pierre and Madame von Fitte to nod and make signs to each other when those two beautiful young women, the marquise and the actress, passed through the widely opened French window out to the lawn.

Kate walked straight towards a cluster of now faded beech trees, and seated herself on a chair formed of the bent branches and part of the trunk of an oak. She pointed to another.

"Pray be seated," she said, courteously.

Victorine in her robes of white and lilac looked like a brilliant autumn blossom. Kate just now had likened her to a tulip, now she thought her like a dahlia.

"Tell me, if you please," began Kate, "if it is your wish to prolong your visit for an indefinite time to my house Castle Bronté?"

Victorine raised her eyebrows insolently, and said with a harsh laugh:

"Really, madam, I have not considered the question. My time just now is my own until my winter engagements in Paris begin, and I love the scenery of Switzerland, and the days pass pleasantly."

She paused; she did not even take this strongest of strong hints; her hard, determined setting of the mouth showed that she did not intend to leave Chateau Bronté until she was compelled to do so.

"I wish you to leave at once," said Kate, in a sweet, low, but firm voice. "At once—do you understand?"

Victorine burst into a shrill, mocking laugh.

"You are jealous, madam—is it so—jealous that your lord is so fond of poor me? Well, I can't help it; he will follow me; he seems mad for me. These nobles always prefer us poor actresses to all the world. Well, well, I should have fancied that you knew the world better. Will you try and keep my lord at home and make him a good boy? Put him through his catechism on Sundays, and make him read a page of Mrs. Hannah Moore every day. Ah, I am afraid you will have a task. Oh, dear me, I really cannot help laughing. Pray forgive, but really—"

And here Victorine went off into a shrill, insulting, mocking laugh—a laugh that she had practised on the stage. There was not a note of real mirth in it, and that Kate knew quite well. Kate sat pale and quiet—very quiet—till some of the fury of Victorine had spent itself in that imitation of merriment, then she said, while Victorine was wiping her eyes with her cambric embroidered kerchief:

"I still wish you to leave. I am old-fashioned enough, though I am not nineteen years old, to wish to be mistress in my own house, to give my own orders, order my horses, carriages and servants when I want them, organise my own picnic parties. I refuse to speak of my husband



[THE STRONGEST WILL.]

to you, and I wonder at your daring to name him to me."

"Ah, Madame La Marquise," cried Victorine, furiously, "I am ready to dare much more, I do assure you. You have not an idea how daring I am. I shall have to leave your chateau, I suppose. Must I leave at once; you said at once, did you not?"

"I did!" said Kate, coldly.

"Then, madam, I will go and pack up my things. I have no maid; may I ask yours, that charming Mademoiselle Pomfret, to assist me?"

"You may."

Kate did not look at her, she was looking at the blue mountain which came so close to the grounds of the chateau. She breathed more freely when the tall, rounded figure in white and purple walked away over the deep emerald verdure of the autumn grass towards the chateau. A sudden breeze made the boughs of the beech trees tremble, and a few leaves fell softly at her feet.

"If they were planted over my grave—if those leaves fell upon it Henri, my husband, would rejoice," said Kate to her heart, "and Cecil, poor, noble Cecil—ah, if I had love like his and a garret for our home I might be happy."

At that moment she saw her husband walking towards her with slow and stately steps.

Victorine, then, has met him and told him all.

She sat upright, she was flushed now, a bright hectic that made her look lovely even in his passion-dazzled eyes. He came to a halt.

"You have behaved very ill, Kate," he said, gravely. "Why not have spoken to me—why insult a guest?"

"Henri, I am incapable of acting wisely, I suffer too much. I only know that if that woman does not leave the house I shall go mad."

He was silent.

"I shall go mad," said Kate, provoked by his silence, "mad, and do something dreadful."

"You are only a child," he said, gently, "a

child who knows nothing of the world. Victorine Sala is the most enchanting woman under the sun."

"Oh, you cruel, cruel Henri," cried Kate.

"She is," repeated Henri, with a cruel smile, "whether you like to hear it or not—women are all jealous of her wherever she goes, but I hoped that you had too much sense and dignity to betray it."

"Cruel, cruel husband," said Kate; "it is not of her great black eyes and long black hair and brown complexion and plump figure that I am jealous—it is not because she smiles and shows her white teeth and casts languishing looks with her eyes. No, it is because you, my husband, are devoted to her from morning till night. She gives her orders in this house like a queen. I, your wife, am nothing—am nobody while she is near. Henri, some wives would kill her," and Kate's blue eyes flashed.

"You are dangerous, little wife," said Henri, with a bitter smile. "We shall have to shut you up if you utter threats like these."

"I utter no threats, I only say what some women, maddened by jealousy, would do. I am not like that, I know there is a righteous court in Heaven, where all wickedness will be judged and all wrongs righted some day. I can wait till then."

"Oh, you are a pattern of piety, my dear wife," said the marquise, with a laugh.

He paused a moment, then he said:

"You look ill, a drive will do you good. I will order the waggonette and we will all go to see the ruins of St. Natalie and have a picnic in the open air. Cheer up, dry your eyes, and chatter as if nothing had happened; speak even pleasantly to this poor Victorine, whom you have insulted. She will not go away now until to-morrow morning, and then she will speak at the breakfast table as if it came from herself the wish to leave—surely you are not so diabolical, with all your professions of religion, as to wish to humiliate her before the servants by making her leave when she has laid a plan for the day?"

"I am not diabolical at all," said Kate; "if she goes to-morrow that will do—but she must go to-morrow, Henri."

The marquise muttered a curse between his teeth which Kate did not hear, then he said:

"She will not wish to intrude longer after your conduct, you may depend upon that, and now go and put on your hat, wrap up warmly, for the air will be cold in the mountain solitudes."

Kate arose. As she passed near to the marquise he just laid his hand lightly on her arm, and he said, softly:

"Jealous little doll."

Kate did not like to be called 'a doll, still her husband spoke gently without bitterness, that was, at least, something.

St. Natalie, a grim ruin enough, grey with centuries, grown with ivy, it stood on a slight rising in the heart of a green valley; mountains on all sides, mountains whose summits were lost in white mists of the autumn day.

At the feet of Kate was an abrupt descent, the side of a mountain clothed in the richest foliage; far down at the bottom ran a bright, swift stream, on the other side lay a fertile valley, backed by hills folded behind hills, and at the extreme background a superb mountain chain.

"The view at the back is the finest," said a voice close to Kate's ear, "where the tops of the mountains are lost in the clouds."

Kate turned, there stood Victorine between her and the ruins, cutting off her retreat. A few steps forward, a violent push from those strong arms and Kate might be hurled down to certain death amid that precipice of trees that sloped away from her feet. She shuddered, for to fall over into that abyss would be a violent, desperate manner of ending her earthly woes. She was not wrong, there was murder in the black eyes of Victorine.

(To be Continued.)



[THEY MEET AGAIN.]

JENNIE THE DREAMER.

(A COMPLETE STORY.)

CHAPTER I.

HER DELIVERER.

SHE was an untidy, plain-looking little girl. Her shoes were down at heel, her stockings showed signs of being in want of the wash-tub and the darning-needle, and her dress, which was several inches too short for her, spoke of bygone affluence and of present neglect, for it was of black satin, and had once been rich and handsome, though now it was absolutely hanging about her in rags.

As far as years suffice to count time by, Jennie was not old, for she had only just passed her tenth summer, but if painful experience and worldly wisdom gained in poverty's hard school, and the sense of grave responsibilities weighing upon her childish shoulders, could have made her into a middle-aged woman, she must have looked care-lined and sallow to the last degree, instead of possessing as she did cheeks that resembled a pair of rosy apples more than anything else in the world.

Did I tell you that Jennie was carrying a baby when I first met her, and was walking down a steep zig-zag path that led from the top of the cliff to the beach—that she was not only staggering under the burden in her arms, but was dragged downwards and backwards by two other small atoms of humanity, who clung one on each side to her ragged skirts.

Such was the case, however, but, nevertheless, oppressed as she was with the burden of so much life, she made her way down the steep path bravely, without once allowing her pace to grow quicker, or the pain caused by the sharp stones and her worn-out shoes to make her pause.

Arrived at the bottom of the cliff, she puts down upon the sand the twelve months old child which she carries in her arms; then she shakes off the clinging grasp of Edgar, who is two years old, and of Julie, who is three, and leaving the little ones to take care of themselves, she withdraws a few paces and begins to amuse herself in a way of her own.

The three infants are evidently well used to be left by themselves when once they are upon the sands, for Julie immediately proceeds to build a fortress with the pieces of wave-washed stone which lie near at hand, while Edgar aimlessly digs in the sand with his wooden spade, and the baby turns first on his side, and then, getting into a more satisfactory position, begins to creep about very much after the fashion of a small turtle.

Meanwhile Jennie is far too much engrossed with her occupation, and too completely assured of the safety of her half brothers and sister, to pay any further heed to them. She is drawing, not with pencil or crayon, but with a rough piece of chalk which the waves have washed in; not upon canvas or drawing-paper, but upon a smooth part of the slaty rock of which the cliff is formed.

With such rude materials fine lines were impossible. Her work must be on a large scale to be effective, and a looker-on would have been surprised to mark how strong and firm were the outlines of her subject.

Her unconscious model was a young fisher-lad, lolling on the side of a boat smoking a short pipe, while he dangled his bare feet between the boat and the sand. His hands were thrust into his trousers pockets, his cap was stuck sideways on his head, and a rich bright red handkerchief was tied loosely round his throat.

Truth to tell, it was this bright bit of colour that had first attracted the girl's attention to the lad, and she sighed sadly when, having rudely sketched the outline of his figure, she found she could not give expression to her ideas for want of materials.

Looking disconsolately along the narrow line

of shingle, she espied what looked like a piece of red chalk. To pounce upon this treasure and apply it to her purpose was the work of a minute, and then Jennie lost herself in dreams as she worked on, and when she looked up to glance at her model, she found that he had finished his pipe and was climbing the cliff on his way home.

"Never mind, I can get along without him," she mused. "I am doing this splendidly. I feel as though I could draw something worth looking at to-day. Oh, what a dreadful long time I seem to be in growing to be a woman; it is a weary time to look forward to before my next birthday will be here, and even then I shall be only eleven. Oh, how I wish I was grown up. I wouldn't nurse the children, I—"

A childish shriek of terror and a gurgling sound startled her at this point of her meditations, and she looked round anxiously. There were Edgar and Julie, but where was the baby?

Well might she ask the question, for little Phil was not to be seen, though Julie was standing by the side of a miniature pond pointing at the water and frantically shrieking:

"I pushed him in—I pushed him in."

Jennie threw down her chalks, rushed to the side of the pool, and there beheld her youngest half brother struggling in its shallow depths. Stories of quicksands which she had often listened to and implicitly believed in would at any other time have deterred the girl from getting into one of these pools that were left by the receding tide; but now her terror for the child's life and dread of her step-mother overcame all other considerations, and without a moment's hesitation she sprang into the water, clutched the drowning baby in her arms, and held it up so that it might breathe the fresh air.

In point of actual depth the water in the pool did not reach quite up to Jennie's arm-pits, but the sand at the bottom was soft and yielding, and seemed to suck her down, and every attempt

she made to get out of her dangerous position seemed to make her sink still deeper into the sand.

She was frightened for the baby, who seemed unconscious and motionless. She was terrified for herself. Horrible stories of people who had been sucked down and buried in the terrible shifting sands flashed upon her mind, and she uttered a piercing shriek for help, which was echoed and re-echoed from the frowning cliffs.

A boy or a girl not much bigger than herself could have helped her, but neither boy nor girl was at hand. Even the fisherman's lad was out of sight, and again and again the girl's wild shriek rang through the silent air, accompanied by the more feeble cries of little Julie and Edgar.

"Hullo! what's the matter?" responds a welcome voice, when the cry has been once or twice repeated; and a few seconds later a tall, handsome youth, with the down of early manhood upon his cheeks, arrives on the spot and takes in the situation at a glance, and perceives the girl's and the baby's danger.

"Give me the child," he says, with quiet authority, reaching over and grasping the little creature's clothes; and then, depositing it upon the dry sand, he with much more difficulty assists Jennie out of the pool.

"Why couldn't you scramble out?" he asked, almost sternly as soon as she was safe.

"The quicksand—I was sinking, and I'd got the baby," she replied, with a white face and gasping breath.

"And how did you get there? You must have been mad to get into such a hole," he continued, in the same severe tone.

"The baby fell in while I was drawing," she answered, humbly. "How is he? He doesn't move."

"No, he seems to be dead," said the young man, examining the infant. "Here, we must lose no time," he added, taking the dripping baby in his arms. "Where do you live?"

But the girl instead of replying to him cried out in terror.

"Dead! Then I daren't go home; my step-mother will kill me! I'll go and drown myself; I won't bear it any longer!" and she was darting off to meet the white-capped waves, when the young man caught her roughly by the arm and shook her.

"You had, wicked girl," he said, in a threatening tone, "if you don't show me where your home is, and that quickly! I will have you put in prison. Take up one of those children; I'll carry the other. Now lead the way!"

For one brief second Jennie looked defiance at her captor, then her eyes fell under his commanding gaze, and without one word of protest she took Julie in her arms, while the young man, still carrying the inamiable baby, picked up Edgar in his other arm and followed the silent and subdued girl up the zig-zag path cut in the cliff.

Poor Jennie was not a pretty object as she toiled up the steep path carrying the heavy child, while the water dripped from her skirts, and her drenched drapery clung to her, as though she had on but one scant garment.

She uttered no complaint, however, nor any word of thanks. She did not even put Julie down to walk when she reached the level ground, but still carrying her she led the way to a large cottage standing by itself in a somewhat extensive garden.

From the windows of this house an extended view of the sea could be obtained, but the sands and the immediate shore were not visible owing to the height of the cliff upon which the cottage stood.

The swinging of the garden gate attracted the attention of someone inside the house, and before the singular party had reached the door a bold, handsome woman, who though far above the condition and station of a labourer's wife, yet seemed to be not quite a lady, rushed out to meet them, and exclaimed in a loud voice in which there was an unmistakable brogue:

"And what's the matter now—is the child kilt? Ooh, wirrathru—ooh, wirrathru!" and she caught the drenched baby in her arms

and began to shriek and cry over it like a mad woman.

But the stranger, young as he was, appeared to be possessed of singular decision of character, and in an imperious tone as he had used to Jennie when she had threatened to drown herself, he said:

"If the child isn't really dead you'll kill it if you behave in this mad way. Take off its clothes, get a hot bath, and let me rub its body. Come, make haste, there's no time to be lost; there is no doctor at hand, I know."

His tone rather than his words calmed the frantic woman. She followed him into the cottage, and while he and Jennie made up the fire and put water upon it, and got a large foot pan to serve as a bath, she took off the infant's wet clothing and wrapped the cold little body in a blanket.

But the stranger would have no time lost. He rubbed the little frame with his warm hands; he tried to resuscitate it in various ways, and when at last their efforts were successful, and little Phil gave a long gasp and opened his baby eyes, Rupert Grenville felt he was rewarded.

"I can leave you now," he observed, some time later as the child lay in a gentle slumber on his mother's breast; "he will be all right to-morrow. Accidents will happen; I don't think you should blame the little girl."

"Not blame her!" the woman exclaimed, her dark eyes flashing violently. "She tried to drown my baby, for sure; she hates the whole of us; she's no child of mine."

"Indeed, you are mistaken, madam," said Rupert, firmly. "She risked her own life to save the child. I saw the whole occurrence myself, but I was too far away to understand exactly what was going on till I reached the spot. The baby crawled to the edge of the pool and dabbled its hands in the water, and then it either fell or was pushed in by this little one," with his hand on Julie's head. "The elder girl jumped in and rescued the baby, and until I heard the shrieks for help I never thought of there being any danger. It seemed so easy for the child to get out of a shallow pool like that. I did not know then that the sands about here are dangerous; but she did, and I must say it was very plucky of her to jump into the water as she did."

"But she'd no business to let the child fall in," said Mrs. Jerningham, with unabated resentment.

"As to that, you can't always have your eyes upon three children at once," said Rupert, with some disdain.

"No, but she didn't look after either of them. She was drawing faces on the cliffs. I know her of old. Would you believe it, sir, I've hid away pens and pencils and paper and everything she can scratch a line with; and yet she'll get bits of chalk on the beach and draws things on the stones. Anything but mind the children or help me about the house."

"But if she has any real talent it might be worth cultivating," remarked Rupert, looking with a new interest at the untidy, plain little girl.

"She with any real talent?" sneered the step-mother. "All her talent lies in leaving her stockings unhemmed and her clothes unwashed, or stealing down on the rocks to look at the sea and the sun; and sit dreaming like a girl that is only half-witted. Or, if she doesn't do that, she'll be drawing ugly portraits of me to show how much she hates me. She with talent, inside! It's little enough talent she's got, or sense of any kind, for that matter."

And the woman laughed a harsh, insulting laugh, which made the indignant blood mount hotly to the girl's cheeks.

"Well, if I were an old man instead of a young one I would have her carefully taught and let her draw as much as she liked," said Rupert, smiling. "But as that isn't practical I must remind you that you owe your child's life to this little girl. By the way, what is your name?" he added, turning to Jennie.

"Jennie Jerningham," she replied, with a wistful look in her large grey eyes.

"Then, Jennie," he said, brightly, "don't lose heart. Remember everything in this world comes to the man or woman who can work and wait for it. And now you had better get on some dry clothing, or you will take cold."

"Thank you, sir, for your kindness to little Phil and to me," said the girl, gratefully.

Then she went up to her bedroom to put on dry garments, but when she returned the young man with the proud, handsome face, the bright smile and the resolute, imperious manner of one who seemed born to command, was gone.

She would have been more surprised than pleased had she known that on leaving the cottage he had walked down again to the shore simply to look for her artistic performance. And he found it, and stood before the rude, rough picture rooted to the spot in sudden surprise.

"That girl is a born artist," he exclaimed at length. "I wish I could help her."

But a moment or two later he laughed at the very idea.

"No, no. Help from me would do her more harm than good. She must fight her own way, and win or lose the battle for herself."

Then he walked away slowly, and a trifle sadly. He pitied the child whom personally he did not admire, and whom he could not help.

CHAPTER II.

A BREAK IN THE CLOUDS.

Would you like to know how the next five years passed with Jennie Jerningham? If I were to tell you in detail I should but give you a record of hard work, of petty privations, and of the countless agonies which a sensitive mind endures when left to the mercy of a vulgar, cruel, half-educated, and wholly selfish woman.

More than once the girl was so goaded to frenzy by taunts and unkindness, often accompanied by blows, that she would have run away from home, have thrown herself into the sea, or have committed some equally rash act, but for those words which the young stranger had bade her remember:

"Everything comes to the man or woman who can work and wait for it."

This had been her anchor—she had regarded the injunction as a promise, as a thing never to be forgotten, as something to be hidden in her heart and remembered without ceasing, and when life would have been too intolerable a burden to be borne this was the secret source of the strength which enabled her to bear up bravely and hopefully under it.

But this assurance of ultimate deliverance made the girl still more dreamy and abstracted than ever, and the neighbours were wont to smile upon her with something like pity and to call her "Jennie the dreamer." For, whenever she could get away from the presence of her step-mother, if she were not sketching the figure of some object within sight, she would sit down with her hands idly clasped upon her knees, and her eyes fixed upon vacancy, her mind absorbed with thoughts of the future and utterly forgetful of the present.

When asked what she was doing she would reply that she was "only dreaming," and so, with her rough pictures and pleasant dreams, the poor girl contrived to live through the succeeding five years of her existence. But when Jennie was fifteen years of age a change came.

Her father, a gentleman by birth but a man of low tastes and dissipated habits, had squandered his fortune and broken the heart of his first wife, who was Jennie's mother. This poor lady's relatives were naturally indignant with him, but still they gave him some help, and would have continued to do so if he had not married a second wife six months after the death of the first.

Then the family of Jennie's mother refused to have anything more to do with him though they offered to take the child and adopt and provide for her. Out of sheer malice and perversity, and certainly not because he had any

love for his offspring, Mr. Jerningham refused this offer. He would not spare his daughter, he said, and any money intended for her benefit must be placed in his hands.

The consequence of this was that he was left to his own resources. These soon became exhausted. He sank lower and lower until he was glad to get a situation as clerk and bookkeeper to a slate quarry in Wales. Here he had been for the last ten years, and here he was likely to remain so long as the overseer would keep him.

From the time he had rudely refused to give up his daughter to any member of his first wife's family Mr. Jerningham had never seen or heard of them. He had, indeed, almost forgotten their existence when, on Jennie's fifteenth birthday, the postman brought him a letter.

It was in a blue envelope. It looked as though it had come from a lawyer, and Mr. Jerningham opened it with some nervousness, feeling sure that it contained some important communication either of good or evil. He was right in his conjecture.

It was from a lawyer and it contained the information that Miss Ida Trevor, the sister of his late wife, was dead. That she had made a will, and among other bequests had left one hundred pounds per annum to her niece, Jane Jerningham, for her sole and exclusive use and benefit.

The letter went on to state that the money was in the hands of trustees, and the annuity would be paid quarterly to Miss Jane Jerningham when she came of age, and during her minority it was to be expended upon the girl's education and comfort. When Mr. Jerningham had read the letter to the end he flung it upon the ground swearing terribly.

Every word of the letter seemed to his distorted imagination to be a deliberate and studied insult to himself. He loved money with an overwhelming greed since it had become so rare with him, for his habits of intemperance had grown upon him; and, if Jennie's money had once found its way into his hands, she would never have been a shilling the better off for it.

"She shan't touch it," he swore, passionately, when he had finished the letter; "she shan't have one penny of it."

And when his wife asked for an explanation he bade her pick up the letter and read it. She did so, and her anger also was great, but it did not make her so blind as it made her husband.

"You can't keep it from her," she said, quickly; "at the utmost you'd only be able to prevent it for six years, and then she'd get the accumulated income in a lump and we should have kept her all the time and not be a penny the better for it. I'd meant to send her out to service next year, but we can't do that, and yet say she shan't touch her mother's money. I much doubt if the law would let us. No, the best thing you can do is to let her take it and give it to us for her keep."

"Give it to us," laughed her husband, in bitter wrath; "ah, you don't know those lawyers. The money may be hers, but till she is of age they'll see how it's spent. Besides, I'd like to write and defy them, 'twould do me good."

"Don't be an idiot," said the wife, impatiently; "we must get some good from it, and there'll be one month less to feed, and the girl can't spend all the money on herself. Here, Jim," she called out, "here's some news for you, there's a fortune left you, it's nearly double as much as your father's. You'll be quite rich now, and 'tis to be hoped you'll be grateful to your father and myself."

For a second or two Jennie looked at her step-mother doubtfully. Was this a cruel joke uttered to taunt her and to raise her hopes only to dash them to the earth the moment she indulged in them? Noticing her incredulity, and by no means surprised at it, Mrs. Jerningham handed Jennie the lawyer's letter and bade her read it.

The care taken to protect her from her father never struck the girl as she read the carefully-worded epistle; two facts alone were clear to her

mind: first, that this money was left to her; and secondly, that it was to be expended upon her education.

"Oh, this is wonderful!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands with delight, while her expressive countenance became almost beautiful with the new hope and joy that lighted up every feature. "And just as I was giving it all up," she went on, rapturously; "just as I was feeling that working and waiting would have no end, this wonderful fortune comes. And now I will learn to paint. I will paint pictures like those I saw at Plas Wynn when the housekeeper let me go through the picture gallery. But I can't stay in the house—it is all too wonderful. I must go down to the sea. May I take the letter with me, father?"

A sullen nod of the head was the only reply. But Jennie construed this as permission, and without another word she left the house and made her way down to the shore. Here, seated on a rock that the highest tides never quite covered, the girl turned her face seaward and lost herself in ecstatic dreams of a golden future.

As a pilgrim on a sandy desert might thirst for water, so this girl had thirsted for knowledge. Every book that she could get hold of she had read over and over again. Fortunately for her, the number of these books was limited, so was the evil they contained.

There is more truth than is generally supposed in the somewhat trite aphorism that "to the pure all things are pure." And Jennie, in her desultory reading, had never recognised the evil if there were any.

She had read Shakespeare and Byron, and Pope's translation of Homer. She had laughed and wept over Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and had pored over the pages of Plutarch, although the lives of Greek heroes could have any interest for a poor, plain, ill-used girl, whose father was a clerk in a counting-house of a quarry, and who was always ill clad and often ill fed.

But Jennie had read and dreamed, and now it seemed as though the fruition of some of her hopes and dreams was at hand. She had quite forgotten how the time had slipped by until she felt a splash of spray upon her face, and rising to her feet she became conscious that her limbs were both stiff and cold. Then she folded up the lawyer's letter, and slowly and thoughtfully returned home.

From this day a new life began for the neglected girl. She was relieved from the household drudgery that she had always disliked. She was no longer obliged to devote her time and attention to the children, and she was allowed to read and draw and paint, and to employ herself very much as she liked.

But the lawyer who paid the twenty-five pounds each quarter day had something to say about the way in which it should be spent. The girl must be educated, he insisted, and he proposed sending her away to school; but as Mr. Jerningham would not consent to this, for the reason that none of the legacy would then come into his pocket, a compromise was made by which the curate of the parish and his wife were paid forty pounds a year for receiving Jennie as a day pupil.

Mrs. Bevan was an artist as well as a highly-educated gentlewoman, and she and her husband were glad to add to their slender income by taking this unpromising pupil. But Jennie was as humble in mind as she was earnest in all she attempted to do, and she worked early and late, worked as though her very life depended upon her progress.

The years went on. A great artist came to this part of Wales when Jennie was just twenty years of age, and as he was slightly acquainted with the Bevans he called upon them.

The girl was at work at her easel when the stranger came into the room, and she was not conscious of his presence until his exclamation of surprise and admiration fell upon her ear.

"Wonderful!" he cried, quite ignoring her presence and turning to Mrs. Bevan, "wonder-

ful. But do you really mean to tell me that your pupil has not been through the art schools in any great city?"

"She has never been as far as Chester since she was a very young child," was the reply.

"Then that makes her work all the more astonishing," said Mr. Trueman; "but there must be no more time lost, she will do grand things yet. How old are you, my dear?" he went on, for the first time addressing Jennie herself.

"I am just twenty, sir," was the reply.

"Twenty. You have the world before you. But you must not bury yourself here any longer."

"My father will not let me leave home till I am twenty-one," said the girl with hesitation.

She did not wish to complain of her parent, but she felt that she must state the fact.

"Won't!" exclaimed Mr. Trueman in disgust. "I don't suppose he could help it if you liked to take the law into your own hands, but that isn't worth while, a year can't make much difference with such talent as yours, and I'll give you a few lessons. I always like to help youthful genius."

Jennie expressed her thanks timidly and shyly. She was intensely gratified as the praise bestowed upon her, but she feared she did not quite deserve it, for her performances fell so far short of her own ideal that they always failed to satisfy her.

Mr. Trueman spent many weeks at the village of Wynn that summer, and all Jennie's time was now devoted to painting and to taking advantage of the instruction and assistance that he so generously gave her.

"Make hay while the sun shines, my dear," Mrs. Bevan one day said, in reply to Jennie's objection that she did not like to take up so much of the artist's time when she could not pay for it.

"Such chances come but once in a lifetime," the kind-hearted lady went on; "the pleasure of teaching an apt pupil pays Mr. Trueman, for he is too rich and too successful himself to care for money, and," she added, with another smile, as though driving away a suspicion that had just occurred to her, "he is old enough to be your father."

"But what has his age to do with my taking up his time?" asked Jennie, with a puzzled expression in her large, round, dreamy eyes.

"Nothing, my dear, nothing," was the hasty reply.

Not for worlds would Mrs. Bevan have suggested that the artist had fallen in love with his pupil. But that was what had happened. He had corrected her faults, had made her strong where before she had been weak. He had painted her portrait in a dozen different lights and positions, and he had ended by losing his heart to her.

But Jennie had no heart to give in return. Ten years ago a man spoke some magic words to her, and she had drawn his portrait a thousand times from memory since then. She had never heard his name, she knew not whence he came or whither he went, she had no more clue wherewith to find him than she had to discover a path to one of the planets. But he had then become the star of her life.

She had loved him, and she had dreamed of him for ten long years, and she loved him and dreamed of him still. If she only closed her eyes he came up before her mental vision, young, noble, god-like in his beauty, severe as Jove, glorious as Apollo, and because she loved him so intensely she had never spoken of her idol.

"I don't think I shall ever marry," she said, when Mr. Trueman offered her his hand. "I cannot tell you how truly grateful I am to you, sir, but I cannot be your wife."

She spoke so calmly that the artist felt convinced that she knew not the meaning of love—knew not its tremulous hopes and anxious fears, and he begged for time to win the heart which, if won at all, would be well worth the labour.

Jennie shook her head. She should not change her mind, she knew. She hoped Mr. Trueman would always be her friend, but he could not be her lover. Mrs. Bevan was greatly disappointed when the artist went away and she knew that her pupil had refused to share her life with him.

"You are a sad dreamer, Jennie," she said, sorrowfully, "a sad dreamer; but life is not made up of dreams; and you will never again have such an eligible offer."

"But I shall have my pictures and my dreams," replied the girl, with a soft smile; and then she went to her own little room to gaze on the portrait of the man who had told her, "All things come to the man or woman who can work and wait for them."

CHAPTER III.

A WONDERFUL PICTURE.

It is the day of the "private view" at the Royal Academy, and artists and authors and the patrons of art throng the spacious rooms of Burlington House. With the natural desire to see how his own picture is hung, Mr. Trueman at once makes his way to the spot.

He has been ill and discontented with life since his rejection by Jennie Jerningham two years ago, and this is the only work that he has sent in this year for exhibition. Already a small knot of people are standing before his canvas, and he cannot but hear some of their comments.

The picture was that of a young girl seated upon a rock looking seaward, while the tide had crept round her and was only within an inch or two of her feet. "A dreamer" the picture was called, and many were the subdued expressions of admiration that the subject and the execution of the work called forth from the spectators.

But one soon gets tired of looking at one's own productions when one is accustomed to producing things, and the artist strolled about the rooms aimlessly enough until he came to a corner into which a crowd of people seemed to have gathered.

There must be something worth seeing here, and he waited his turn. When his eyes fell on the particular object of interest he recognised the bay and the peculiar position of the rocks and sands and cliffs, for it was the self-same scene as that in which his "Dreamer" sat.

But the picture told him nothing else. There was a young man of some nineteen or twenty years of age holding a dripping and apparently lifeless child in one arm, while his disengaged hand seemed to roughly grasp the shoulder of a ragged girl whose features and attitude vividly expressed terror and desperation.

Two other little children were looking up into the young man's face with great fear depicted on their tiny countenances, while the pool of clear, greenish water by which they stood, and the receding tide, told their own story of the danger from which the infant had been rescued.

Mr. Trueman turned over the leaves of his catalogue, found the number, and read, "You wicked girl," and the artist's name—"J. Jerningham." He looked at it incredulously. This could not be the work of little Jennie, the dreamer.

Clever as the girl was, it was still too much to expect that she could have executed this graphic and finished picture. With trembling fingers he turned over the pages of the catalogue to look for the list of the exhibitors' names and addresses at the end.

Yes, it was Jennie's work; there was her name and address staring him plainly in the face. He could not tear himself away from this wonderful picture. It had a fascination for him.

Every line and detail he studied as though he were intent upon copying it, and while thus occupied he discovered what had escaped his observation before—a rude, uncertain drawing

on a slab of slate which formed part of the face of the cliff. This gave him the clue he wanted. It was, then, a scene out of the girl's own life that she had depicted in such glowing colours.

The crowd passed on. Other sight-seers came and went, and still Arthur Trueman stood studying Jennie's work. He had overheard many comments upon it, but for all that he was startled by hearing a lady say, in a tone of surprise:

"Sir Rupert, look here. This must be your portrait."

"My portrait," replied a tall gentleman, with chestnut hair and a heavy moustache. "Quite impossible, I assure you."

"But it is," persisted the lady; "your portrait as you were a dozen years ago, when you came to visit us at Plas Wynn. You must look at it."

The man addressed as Sir Rupert seemed to cast a swift glance of reproach at the lady, for he had not looked at the canvas. Then he edged his way through the little knot of people still gathered before it, and when his eye fell upon the painting he could not help giving an involuntary start as he recognised the scene, and fresh as though it had happened but yesterday, the memory of his meeting with the plain, ragged little artist girl came up before him.

Arthur Trueman, watching him, felt his own heart sink like lead in his bosom—felt that he could spring at the man's throat and strangle him. Instinctively he knew that this man was his rival—his unconscious rival, perhaps, but not on that account less formidable.

He restrained himself, however, and tried to reason away his absurd fancy. The lady had said the portrait of a dozen years ago. It certainly was not the portrait of the man as he stood there looking at the painting any more than it was the portrait of Jennie as she now was.

"Yes," said Sir Rupert, slowly. "I suppose I was like that then. I will tell you the story another time, Lady Baintree. I have often wondered what has become of that poor little girl. By the way, who is the artist? She must have told the story to someone." And he began to turn over the leaves of his catalogue, while he and his party moved on with the continual stream.

Art had no more charms for Arthur Trueman that day. It was for this man he had been refused; this man's image had been enshrined in the girl's heart, and had left no room for a second idol. And following at a distance his unconscious rival, noticing how tall and handsome and manly he was, the artist realised how hopeless was his own suit if this man ever entered the lists against him.

Hitherto he had hoped and believed he should one day win the prize he coveted, and Mrs. Bevan, who sometimes wrote to him, had assured him he had no rival, but she said nothing about this picture, and in all probability she was unacquainted with the history of the subject.

Scarcely knowing why he did so, or what he hoped to learn about them, Mr. Trueman followed the man whom he had heard addressed as Sir Rupert and the ladies who were with him through the long rooms, never for a moment losing sight of them, and his persistence was at last rewarded.

Just as the party he was following had reached the last room, and were about to pass through the turnstile, a Royal Academician with whom Trueman was intimately acquainted met them as he was entering the suite of rooms, and shaking hands with Sir Rupert and the three ladies, stood a few minutes chatting with them. When they had parted, and the man in whom he was so much interested had gone, Trueman pounced upon the R.A., and, with a hurried apology, asked:

"Who is that man from whom you have just parted, and who are the ladies with him?"

"The man is Sir Rupert Grenville. The ladies are Lady Baintree and the Hon. Mrs. FitzAllan and her daughter."

"Ah! Thank you," muttered Trueman.

"Don't think me inquisitive, but is Sir Rupert married? Who is he, and what is he?"

"Only three questions to answer in one breath," laughed his friend. "To begin with, Sir Rupert is not married. Next he is a baronet, with a large rentroll and a long pedigree, and lastly he is a very jolly good fellow."

"He looks that, at any rate," was Trueman's reply; "but you have not told me what I really want to know, after all."

"I know that," replied the other, "but I'll gratify you as far as I can."

"Then begin. Was he born to the baronetcy? and, if he is not married, is he engaged?"

"I cannot answer the last question," replied the R.A., "except by saying that no engagement is announced. A dozen years ago, or very nearly so, he was in love with a Miss Wynn, now Lady Baintree, but he was poor then—the younger son of a younger son—and she was ambitious. And though her father owns some property in Wales he is far from being rich. Whether matters ever came to an engagement I cannot say, but that Rupert Grenville was very much in love with the lady, I can tell you."

"But why did it not end in marriage?" demanded Trueman, impatiently.

"Poverty on the side of the man and ambition on that of the lady, my good fellow," was the reply.

"But I suppose he is rich now?"

"Yes, but his prospects were not worth much then, and Miss Wynn could not afford to wait, seeing she is seven years his senior, so she married old Sir Peter Baintree, and three years ago Rupert Grenville succeeded his uncle in the baronetcy and fifteen thousand a year."

"But he loves this woman still?" asked Trueman, eagerly.

His friend smiled, as he shook his head, and said:

"Seven years between a man and a woman to the woman's disadvantage, when he is twenty, and seven years when he is thirty-two makes a wonderful difference, and though Lady Baintree daily expects to lose her husband, she can scarcely hope that her youthful lover will still be anxious to marry her."

"I hope he will," was the reply that startled the R.A. not a little.

And then with scarcely an adieu, Trueman went on his way.

CHAPTER IV.

JENNIE'S FATE.

This last summer has passed quietly and pleasantly enough with Jennie. Her picture was accepted by the Royal Academy, was well hung, she is told, and has sold for the, to her, enormous sum of three hundred pounds.

In very truth she had not wished to sell this painting. She would have liked to have kept it with her always, and she had put what she had considered a fabulous price upon it to ensure its return. But it was sold, and who the buyer was Jennie had not the least idea.

The girl is no longer living with her father and stepmother, and the noisy brood of youngsters, who allow her no time for her work, or comfort in her life. She gives her stepmother half of her hundred a year, and, since the day she came of age, she has lived with the Bevans.

Her life is not spent idly. She is working for wealth and fame, and she is waiting for the fate that she feels satisfied will one day come to her. It comes when she is least expecting it, and in a manner for which she is in no wise prepared.

Autumn has set in, visitors have arrived at Plas Wynn, the one great house in the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Bevan is in a pleasing flutter of expectation, feeling sure that some of "the family" will call upon her, for, besides being the wife of the curate, who, in the absence of the rector, is an important person, she

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has a young lady possessing great artistic talent, staying with her.

For Jennie Jerningham is always spoken of by the Bevans as a friend and visitor, and not as one who pays for her rooms and her board. The girl is only too glad to be admitted upon this footing, and never in her life has she been so happy as she is now.

It is a morning late in August, and Jennie, who has been out on the rocks dreaming for an hour or more, is now steadily at work putting those dreams upon canvas.

So absorbed is she in her occupation that she does not hear the sound of carriage wheels. The noise of footsteps, and of people talking does not reach her, and she is only startled when a voice that has a strangely familiar ring in it says:

"Then this is Miss Jennie Jerningham."

In surprise she turns round, palette and brush in hand, to confront the speaker, but before she can utter a word a woman's voice exclaims with a harsh laugh,

"Why this is the original of the 'Dreamer.'"

Mrs. Bevan here rushes to the rescue, and introduces the girl to the party from Plas Wynn.

"Just imagine, my dear," she says, to cover Jennie's awkwardness and to distract the almost fixed stare with which she is regarding Sir Rupert. "It was this gentleman who bought your picture, the 'Wicked Girl' and he wants to see what else you are doing."

Jennie lowered her eyes, recovered her self-possession with an effort, made a few incoherent remarks about gratitude and pleasure, and then turned to the canvas and tried to speak of the subject of her painting.

But she was all of a tremor. Her heart fluttered like an imprisoned bird against the bars of its cage. She appeared more reserved than usual, because she could not command her voice to speak without giving expression to the rush of feeling that almost overpowered her.

The ladies thought her stupid, but Sir Rupert looked at her in silent wonder. Could this refined, gentle, almost beautiful woman have ever been the ragged, dirty, plain little girl, whom, with the half-drowned baby in her arms, he had helped out of the treacherous pool.

Scarcely, and yet, the steadfast dreamy eyes were the same, and if the cheeks had lost their apple-like ruddiness and had become more peach-like, there was still a little dimple near the mouth which he thought he could remember.

But it was the expression of the face that gave it its real beauty, and this had come since he had last looked upon it, and her grey morning dress with the crimson roses in her bosom likewise belonged to the present as much as the old ragged satin dress did to the past. The visitors did not remain long.

Sir Rupert said something about giving her a commission to paint a group of some of his nephews and nieces for him, and Lady Baintree spoke of a coming dinner party at Plas Wynn, to which the Bevans and Jennie were to be invited. Then they went away and Jennie sat down before her unfinished picture.

She could not work. She could not think clearly or reasonably. She had worked and waited and "he" had come. But he had looked upon her as a stranger, and yet he must have recognised her. And she! She felt as though her heart would break with the pain and agony that the knowledge of the great social gulf that divided them, brought to her.

Through all these years she had treasured up his image in her heart. Night and morning his parting words had been upon her lips. He was changed, but not as much as she was changed, and the tone of his voice struck her as forcibly as it had done long years ago.

She could not work, she dared not weep in the house lest anyone should guess her secret and think her mad. So she made her way down to the shore to tell her old friend, thesea, the story of her grief and despair.

Instinctively she avoids the solitary rock upon

which for years she has been wont to sit and dream her happiest dreams. No, she cannot seek her old seat to-day. The sound of the breakers tumbling in at her feet would mock her, but she clammers over dark low-lying rocks underneath the frowning cliff, and here, secure as she believes, from all human observation, she throws herself upon the weed-covered rock, limp, aimless, and hopeless.

But though she came here to weep, tears now forsake her. The pain in her heart will not be relieved, and she looks out towards the sea with a dull, glassy despair on her face that seems terrible in one so young.

For a long time she continues to gaze upon the glittering moving mass of water, with the dull apathy which utter hopelessness imparts, until gradually her eyes swim, her head falls forward, and she lies peacefully upon the rock; but whether she has fainted or is in a child-like slumber, there is no one by to question. And the tide turns, and comes in, slowly and gently.

First of all in little ripples, then in shallow waves, but each wave as it tumbles in and then returns to its parent's ocean, never fails to gain on its predecessor, and so, some of the sands are covered, and the rocks are reached, and the swelling waters come on and on till they splash the girl, who still lies there calm and motionless.

"I seem to have been born expressly for the purpose of pulling you out of the water," a well remembered voice says in Jennie's ear.

She opens her eyes slowly, and sees the face she best loves bending over her. But it cannot be real, it is one of her dreams. A very happy dream, nevertheless, and she smiles faintly, and closes her eyes again. She would like to dream on like this for ever.

"Come Jennie, my darling, rouse yourself—wake up. Don't you see that we are caught by the tide; look up, open your eyes or we shall both be drowned."

Again she looked up. Could it be more than a dream? Even as she asks herself the question, a warm kiss is pressed upon her lips, and all doubt is dissipated.

She is in Rupert's arms. He calls her his darling, and he kisses her. It is no dream. She looks at him eagerly, questioningly, and his eyes meet hers and answer them to her heart's content.

"And you have loved me all these years, Jennie?" he asks, at length.

"Yes, all these years," she replies, trustingly. "You told me that all things came to the man or woman who could work and wait for them. And I have worked and waited, and now what I prayed for has come."

And then she nestles her head in his breast.

"You are too good for me, Jennie," he replied, with emotion, as he pressed her to his heart; "but if we live we will spend our lives together, and if we die—"

"Die!"

The girl started as though an icy hand had touched her. A short time ago she had prayed for death; but to die when she was happy, when all that life could give her was at her feet. No! oh, no! and she looked about her, for the first time realising that they were in danger.

Sir Rupert, wandering alone upon these rocks, and not thinking of the tide, had come to where Jennie lay, while the waves were only splashing her, and he had taken her in his arms and carried her close to the side of the cliff.

If they had lost no time at first they might still have got round to the sands with nothing worse than wet feet to complain of. But Sir Rupert could not carry the girl in his arms for any great distance, and, do what he would for a time, he could not rouse her, so he had no alternative but to remain with her, or leave her to certain death.

"I can't die!" exclaimed Jennie, almost wildly, as she realised the peril of their situation. "Come, let us make haste; come with me, this way. Can you climb?"

"Anything but a smooth wall," he replied, looking ruefully at the perpendicular side of the cliff.

"Yes, but it is not so bad round here. We must get through, never mind the water, it is our only chance."

And so saying, with wonderful coolness and decision, she led the way round the foot of the cliff, undaunted by the waves that drenched her dress and sometimes splashed over her.

But she reaches the spot she has sought. A flight of rude notches, rather than steps, cut in a fissure of the cliff, and that could only be climbed like a ladder, led to a kind of snelf, upon which they would be safe till the tide receded, and from whence, if they were very venturesome, they might try to make their way to a narrow path which a goat would have feared to tread, but which some of the more reckless of the quarrymen used when the tide was in.

"Shall we try to climb up to the path, or wait here?" asked Jennie, when she reached the place of safety.

"Let us stay here and talk of our plans for the future," he replied, clasping her yielding form in his strong, protecting arm.

And the girl smilingly assented, for what greater happiness than to be with him she loved could time or space afford her. Her wildest dreams were realised—she had not a desire ungratified.

Love was to her impassioned soul,
Not as to others, a mere part
Of her existence, but the whole;
The very life-blood of her heart.

That night there was great consternation in the halls of Plas Wynn, for Lady Baintree had suddenly become a widow. This, however, was not the blow that had so greatly prostrated her ladyship.

Half an hour before her husband's sudden death she had learnt that her old admirer, Sir Rupert Grenville, was engaged to marry Miss Jerningham, better known in the neighbourhood as "Jennie, the dreamer."

"I should like to kill her," muttered her ladyship, vindictively, when assured that the news was true.

Perhaps Mr. Trueman's feelings towards the baronet were not a whit more cordial.

J. F.-W.

A DAIRY FARM IN HOLLAND.

A GENTLEMAN lately visited one of the leading stock and dairy farms in Holland, and gives the following interesting account of what he saw:—

"They used the very same stable at the farm that they did in the fourteenth century. They have little rings in the ceilings, with cords passing through them, by which the cows' tails are held up to keep them from getting dirty. The stable was carpeted, and had plants and flowers in it. The floor of the stable was of small bricks. At the back of the stalls was a trough of masonry about eight inches wide and nine inches deep, with a ditch or reservoir of water at one end. As soon as the trench was dirtied they turned in water, and all the manure was carried out to a covered vat, whence it could be removed to the fields or wherever they wanted it moved to. The cows were as clean, if not cleaner, than our horses. All the fastening they have is a little cord round their necks, and they are so gentle and quiet that they don't require anything stronger. They use brass milk pails instead of wooden or tin ones."

I saw the way they make the round cheeses that are sent to America. They have wooden moulds in the shape of two hemispheres or half balls; these are hollow and fit together. The cheese curd is first roughly pressed into shape, and then placed in the moulds. The lower half of the mould is stationary, while the upper part is fastened to a kind of screw, working in a beam overhead. The upper part is screwed down tight, and the cheese is left for a week. At the

end of a week it is screwed down tighter, and left another week. At the end of a third week the cheese is exposed to the air, and the curing begins. It takes three months for a cheese to be cured, and a year before it is fit for the market. Everything was as sweet and neat as any parlour I ever saw. The stables and stalls for the horses were covered with matting. You have no idea how neat everything was."

TIME'S REVENGE;

OR,

FOILED AT THE LAST.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TRUMPED.

SIR GERALD'S back was towards Fayette, but she could see that he was preoccupied, if not quite absorbed by his task. She was about to call to him by name, but a moment's reflection told her it would be only polite to wait until he was disengaged. With eager impatience she watched but he did not seem in any haste.

Once or twice he glanced about, then resumed his employment. At length he stopped, and earnestly examined one particular page. Then, with a quick step, he went to the door, opened it, peered this way and that, then softly returned to the sideboard. Taking a small ink bottle, such as travelling clerks and collectors use, from his pocket, and a pen from a cigar case, he wrote something.

"Sir Gerald Allenby?" gently called Fayette.

But her voice sounded faint and weak. He did not catch his name, but the noise made him start violently. With terrified haste he shut the book, pushed it back on the sideboard, and darted from the room. Fayette had begun to descend the stairs, in order to speak to him.

The wall hid the room from those on the staircase, therefore the young girl did not know that Sir Gerald had run away. When she reached the foot of the stairs, she looked all round with amazement, mingled with keen disappointment. As she stood gazing around in bewildered perplexity, Mr. Arundell entered. Fayette ran to meet him.

"Where has Sir Gerald gone?" she asked.

Mr. Arundell stared at her.

"Sir Gerald? Sir Gerald Allenby, is he here? have you seen him? Perhaps your cousin Beattie is here," surmised the old gentleman, with sudden hope.

"I thought perhaps you had sent him," said Fayette. "I saw him coming, then I saw him in this room. I called to him, and came down, but he was gone."

"We will ask the landlady," said Mr. Arundell. "How long did he stay?"

"Only a few minutes. He was writing."

"Writing? A letter?"

"No, writing in that book," said Fayette.

Mr. Arundell went over, and looked at the book.

"Oh, visitors' names. Writing his name, I suppose. Ah, here is a bit of blotting paper, and an envelope with his own name and address on it, off some letter—hm, ah?"

Suddenly Mr. Arundell stood as if spell-bound, staring at the page at which he had opened the book as if mesmerised. He seemed petrified.

"What is the matter, dear Mr. Arundell?" asked Fayette, alarmed by his abrupt silence and singular aspect.

The old gentleman did not answer, but rubbed his finger over some writing on the page, then rubbed his spectacles and examined the writing afresh.

"You saw him write in this book, my dear? You are quite sure—certain and positive sure?"

Fayette nodded her head.

"You could swear to that in a court of justice?"

"Yes," faltered the young girl, frightened at his tone. "Oh yes, I am quite sure."

"I know this has been written only a short time, because I have succeeded in slightly smudging the ink, which I could not have done had it been written years ago, as it purports to have been. Read it."

Fayette looked at the writing. The names of two persons had been inscribed:

"Mr. Alexander Allenby and his wife, Mrs. Margaret Allenby."

The date at the top of this page was "September 20, 1854."

"The name of—of my father and—what does it mean?" stammered Fayette, turning her blanched face to Mr. Arundell.

"A deed of villany," said he. "I do not quite understand it. Sit down. There is your new maid?"

Elizabeth answered for herself by walking in. Mr. Arundell desired her to ask the landlady to come, as he wished to speak to her, and then to collect everything belonging to Miss Lascelles. Fayette sat down. In a few minutes the old landlady came in smiling. "Mr. Arundell stood so as to hide from view the book that had been tampered with."

"Excuse my being abrupt and hurried," he said, "as a carriage is waiting to take us on, and we are bound to time. May I ask if you were here in '54?"

The landlady changed colour, and twitched up one corner of her apron. But she answered glibly.

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Are you good at remembering people? Can you recollect any people who were staying here at that time?"

"Some," cautiously answered the landlady.

"Do you remember a Mr. Allenby and his wife, for example?"

"Oh, dear yes. A tall, handsome man he was, and she was a sweet, bonny creature, with golden hair, much like this young lady," said the woman. "The gentleman wrote his name and hers down. I remember it well."

"You may be called on to prove this in a court of justice," said Mr. Arundell. "Do you know the punishment of perjury?"

"Sir?"

"Have you not been tutored in your falsehood by a gentleman who has paid you well?"

"No, sir. I've told you the truth."

"Well, it does not matter for the present. But I would not advise you to tell your falsehood to anyone else, for I know certain matters which would easily convict you," said Mr. Arundell. "Are you aware that someone has been making false entries in your visitors' book?"

The old woman's face told that she did not know this, and she looked dismayed. Mr. Arundell's quick ear and sharp eye warned him that Sir Gerald was returning, and he caught the woman's arm, drawing her sufficiently near to the window to command a view of the pathway leading to the house.

"Is not that the man who instructed and bribed you?" he said.

The woman began to cry, but Mr. Arundell strode to the door.

"Come here, Gerald Allenby," he called sharply. Gerald turned. "I do not know what game you are trying to play, but it certainly is not an honest one. What you have just done has been witnessed. Beware. I know nothing of you, but I warn you to be careful."

Sir Gerald could not for a moment remember where he had seen this stern old man, who thus boldly accused him. But in a moment or two he recollected where he had met him. He did not know how much had been seen of the deed, just done, but he felt that he was foiled, and cursed his ill-luck or his carelessness.

"Who are you? What do you mean by this insolence?" he sullenly asked.

"It is useless to parley with me. Go—but beware."

Sir Gerald slowly turned and walked away.

Some clumsiness or some ill fate had ruined his game. Elizabeth came down the stairs at this moment. The landlady was whimpering in a corner. Fayette stood up, and Mr. Arundell took her hand.

"Mark," he said to the landlady, "that man has just forged some names in your book—the names you declare you saw written twenty-six years ago. I am going to ask a magistrate to take that book away."

He went out; a carriage was waiting, and in a few minutes the little party was driving rapidly towards the place where Miss Ibbotson and her betrothed, Gervase Fordham, were staying. The old woman watched them drive off, then ran back, caught up her book, rushed into the kitchen, and tearing the leaves out in a frenzy of alarm, thrust them between the bars of the grate. A strong fire quickly consumed the paper, and then she flung the covers on the top of the fire.

"Oh, but," she muttered shaking her old fist in the air, "ye may have some trouble now, with your tales and your fancies!"

She could not read, but took it for granted that what Mr. Arundell had asserted must be true, and thought that if the book could not be found, the danger of detection would not be so great.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AT THE POINT OF THE SWORD.

AUNT PRUE almost wept over her beloved Fayette. She was astounded at the story revealed, horrified at Sir Gerald's audacity—in such a state of mind that she could hardly control her feelings with due moderation. Had not Mr. Arundell and Mr. Fordham both strongly remonstrated she would have insisted on starting off without a moment's delay for Provence. As it was, she entreated Mr. Arundell so pathetically to take her and Fayette the next morning that he agreed.

A room was hospitably assigned to Mr. Arundell by the people with whom Aunt Prue and her lover were staying. Fayette shared her aunt's room. Early the next morning Mr. Arundell and the two ladies started for France.

Miss Ibbotson was certainly the most impatient of the three. She could scarcely curb her anxiety and uneasiness. The journey seemed to her interminable, and it was with a gasp of relief that she sat down in the cool parlour of the convent.

Here everything seemed to breathe of tranquillity, of serene peace. After a short interval of waiting the mother-superior entered—soft, sweet, gentle. With a mild salutation, she made a few inquiries of Mr. Arundell, in excellent English, and then gave him the paper to read. She said she could not let him take it away unless he brought the necessary documents to prove the young lady's identity.

Aunt Prue read over Mr. Arundell's shoulder although he read aloud. She almost uttered a shriek of astonishment at the discovery that Margaret Lascelles confessed that Fayette was in reality the elder child of Hubert Allenby supposed to have been drowned in infancy. She had found the child asleep on the sands, the maid having wandered away with a sweetheart; on the girl's return the supposed child had awakened, crept to the edge of the cliff, and fallen into the water. Unwilling to admit that she had left the child, the girl had said as a fact that it had fallen into the water. Thus no one ever thought of its ever being stolen. It was to inflict misery on Hubert Allenby and his wife for some fancied slight or injury that Margaret Lascelles had carried off their infant. She believed they had prejudiced Alexander against her. She acknowledged that Alexander had never married her, penitently adding that she thought her evil temper had disgusted him.

Aunt Prue wept tears of joy over Fayette. "How delightful our dear Beattie will be," she said. "Oh, Mr. Arundell, how can I thank you for the kindness, for the trouble you have taken."

The gentle mother-superior was much interested and hospitably entertained her guests. She asked many questions about the guilty woman who had left the written confession with her, some of which were answered. Although she had left the world years ago, she had a feminine sympathy with romance, and loved to hear little tales of love, happy or marred in the end. It was with regret she saw these visitors depart, and made Fayette promise to send her a note telling her how they fared on their way home.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

FOILED AT THE LAST.

MADAM was very indignant when Elizabeth did not return at the proper hour. From indignation she passed to uneasiness, then to alarm, then to despair and desperation. Soon Mrs. Lascelles learnt that Fayette was not to be found in the house. She felt convinced that she had run away with Eric Armitage, but Mr. Arundell had been considerate enough to send a few lines by post.

"The poor girl whom you have so cruelly tried to injure has left you, never to return," he wrote. "She is about to go to Provence, to discover the truth. Yours, G. ARUNDELL."

In her waking moments Margaret had almost completely forgotten her written confession. She was perfectly certain that she had never hinted at it to any living creature; if possible, she would have obtained possession of it, and destroyed such terrible evidence against herself. In vain she tried to guess how the girl Fayette, or her friends, could have gained information of this past secret of her life. Like a tigress in its den she paced to and fro, trying to realise her mind. She could daringly and cleverly use circumstances if she knew how they existed towards each other; but now she was like one of those duellists who fight in the dark, unknowing where the enemy crouches, fearful lest a breath, a footfall may betray.

Mrs. Lascelles was in no amiable frame of mind to receive a visit from Mr. Armitage. That gentleman, frank and fearless, accustomed by a fond mother to the idea that he had only to order to be obeyed, simply called, armed with some lame excuse. The poor fellow was utterly confounded when he heard that his queen had vanished. Margaret Lascelles watched him with much the same spite a mischievous boy feels in regarding the emotions of a cockchafer transfixed on a pin. To heighten the situation, she calmly intimated that she felt convinced her daughter had eloped disgracefully with a lover.

It was as well for Margaret that her sex protected her, or the results might have been disastrous. Eric, of course, merely bowed himself out of the house as politely as his strongest powers of self-control would admit. And then he played a little part in the enraged tiger in a den up and down the dull street. It is curious, this singular sense of ownership which an all-absorbing love gives.

If any midnight thief had robbed him of all his worldly goods, he would not have felt so cruelly defrauded as he did at this moment. He had seen Fayette only once, yet he was absolutely convinced that she belonged to him, and if this other lover, who had carried her away, had only appeared within his den, or promenade, during this bad quarter of an hour, one of two rivals would have had a sad account to render up at the bar of justice.

Mr. Armitage called his beautiful queen various names not warranted by his relationship with her—cruel, fickle, treacherous, wicked. He ransacked his mental storehouse for shabby epithets to bestow upon her. Life was no longer worth living, he had been abominably ill-used.

Henceforth he would never believe in human goodness. Mr. Armitage would have been a droll spectacle, had he not felt so utterly miserable. They jest at scars who never felt a wound, and people are apt to laugh alike at toothache

and disappointed love. After storm comes a calm. Eric did not see that he could achieve any useful result by marching up and down this dull London street. He therefore returned to Altenham.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WEDDING BELLS.

BEATTIE was overjoyed when she received a letter from Fayette telling her the curious story just discovered. A few lines from Aunt Prue were enclosed. To Miss Beattie Allenby the Fates had always been kind, and now they seemed inclined to fill her cup of happiness to overflowing.

She could not pretend grief for the death of a father who had barely fulfilled his duty towards her, who had scarcely evidenced an interest in her existence. Lady Allenby and Miss Rochester had taken care that she should be arrayed in the richest of escapes and other mourning stuffs outwardly, but in her heart silver bells of joy were echoing promises of pleasure and content.

The letters were slightly delayed by being sent to Altenham, but were carried by one of the grooms to the Towers. Beattie saw to find Jessie. At the Towers she felt far more at home than at Altenham. Already she had prattled so much of Fayette that the name was quite familiar to Miss Rochester.

Jessie reigned sovereign queen at the Towers. Her majesty's first idea was to invite Fayette to the Towers, and hold grand feast, banquets and tournaments in her honour, but sovereigns—even sovereign ladies—are subject to second thoughts.

In fact, so many lines crowded in upon the regal brain of the lady of the Towers, that she felt it necessary to summon any number of counsels. The one chief idea remained dominant that she wished to do all possible honour to her friend Beattie. By one of those strange freaks by which women confound all the reasoning of philosophers, she had taken a deep, invincible affection for Miss Allenby.

"But don't bother yourself, you are Miss Allenby now," she said, between laughing and crying. "Fayette is Miss Allenby now. You are quite snuffed out—extinguished; only a co-heiress, don't you know. I long to see her. That wretched carte gives me an idea of her. I am quite sure I should know her if I met her on the top of Mont Blanc. Mont Blanc! Brilliant idea for a wedding cake. Oh, Beattie, you never told me if Fayette—"

And then the conversation ran off to the subject of lovers and that kind of talk. Beattie assured her friend, Miss Rochester, that Fayette had no lover. And instead of properly considering the Herald-King-at-Arms mode of re-installing Miss Allenby in her due station, Miss Rochester fell to imagining where she could find a Romeo for the pretty Juliet who was Beattie's sister.

Mr. Arundell had an interview with Mr. Fielding, and everybody interviewed everybody else. Lady Allenby was in a greater rage than before. Margaret Lascelles received an official note from Mr. Fielding, which told her it was useless to cherish any further designs on the great Altenham property.

For some time Sir Gerald remained in abject fear of his second forgery being discovered. But he was one of those privileged beings who, if they do not profit much by their evil deeds, yet, by some singular lapse of justice, escape punishment.

Aunt Prue's marriage was very quiet. Her two girl-relatives could not attend, because they were both in heavy mourning. But their faithful love and most earnest wishes hovered about her.

Lady Allenby departed for London in high dudgeon. She was a clever woman; she went to live in a fashionable neighbourhood, affected the fashionable lady, and at the end of her widow's mourning tricked a fashionable physician into marrying her.

Miss Rochester carried off the two Allenby sisters to Venice. Percy Darvill was not slow to follow. The two old ladies at The Briars had died within a few weeks of each other, and left him their estate. Eric Armitage had a harder fight with life; but he was made of stern materials. He allowed himself a brief holiday during those dreamy weeks at Venice, and when he came back he set to work to read for the bar.

To those who have the enviable capability for taking pains, life offers many magnificent prizes. To the idler and the mere pleasure seeker, to the criminal and the selfish only, are the golden gates barred. The necessary twelve months of mourning, a mockery of outward show, had flown away.

And then Altenham bloomed and rejoiced under such a flush of bridal finery, such a glow of wedding favours and wedding bells, that the oldest inhabitant, who happened to be the crustiest of old bachelors, could not make out what had happened.

Mr. Arundell gave two of the brides away. Aunt Prue could not attend the wedding, but sent her love. Mr. Fielding drew up the settlements and made a speech at the breakfast. The brides looked lovely, as most brides do; but, wonderful to remark, none of the brides shed one tear.

The brides were three in number. Yes, by a freak known only to sovereign ladies, Miss Rochester elected to be married at the same time as Miss Allenby and Miss Beattie Allenby. And Mrs. Darvill, Mrs. Armitage, and Mrs. Wilfred Cranston lived happy ever after with the husbands of their happy choice. The evil spirits shrank away.

Mrs. Wilfred Cranston—she always signed her letters "Jennie," and wrote to Mrs. Armitage as constantly as to Mrs. Darvill—was obliged to go to Madras for a few years; but she returned, because the climate "did not agree with the children." And somebody else must write the lives and adventures of each of the young people who made Altenham, The Briars, and The Towers ring with happy laughter.

[THE END.]

KITTY.

Pretty little Kitty

Sat upon a stile,

Sang a little ditty

To herself the while.

Watching how the sparrows—

Seeking grain to eat—

Dart about like arrows

In among the wheat.

Pretty little Kitty

Liked the birds to see!

Though it was a pity

They were wild and free.

So she stopped her singing—

Left the stile forlorn;

And went gaily springing

In among the corn.

Pretty little Kitty,

Fond of country things,

Cares not for the city,

Where no birds sing.

Now—who would have thought

it?

She has got it, pat!

Little Kitty's caught it!

Kitty's but a cat!

—Fam.

SHEEP'S HEAD FISH.—A fish that goes under this name is plentiful in the latter part of summer on some parts of the coast of North America. It is highly esteemed for the table. Its weight is sometimes as much as fourteen or fifteen pounds. A very large fish is sometimes sold in New York for a price equal to four or five pounds sterling.



[A DIVIDED HOUSE.]

GRETCHEN.

I AM not of German descent, neither can I lay claim to any kinsmen among that people; nor, to my certain knowledge, have any of my family ever before borne the name of Gretchen. Although I consider it a very pretty name, I never could understand why it should have been given me. Possibly some friend suggested it; or my father, who professed a great admiration for the German people, and was much given to reading romances, may have bestowed it upon me, I am sure I don't know.

I am living at Bradford, and have been for the past two years. My little girl, Nellie, who is seven years old, and I have just returned from the theatre, where we went to see "Rip Van Winkle" played. The play seems to possess a kind of fascination for me, because the incidents in the heroine's life coincide so nearly with those of my own.

The piece was well acted, especially where Gretchen drove her husband out into the storm; and I wept like a child, it so recalled my own sad past. Five years ago I also drove my husband from me; my husband, whom I love so dearly that every day in the week, and every hour in the day, I am hoping and longing for his return. Must I also wait twenty years to see him come back old and feeble, with all the exquisite happiness and bright joys which youth

alone is capable of feeling, taken out of both our lives by my own rash act?

Why had I not more patience? Because he erred, what right had I to drive him from me? His nature is weak and yielding. Driven from his own hearthstone, with no loving heart to rest upon, cast off by his wife and shut out from the sight of his child and all home joys, will he be apt to grow strong in the right. Oh, I see my sin now that it is too late. In my pride and indignation I said:

"You must leave your wine or leave me, for I never will submit to the disgrace of being a drunkard's wife."

Why instead did I not try to lure him from the fatal cup with gentle words and wifely love?

"Mamma, why don't you come to bed? I can't go to sleep. May Nellie come and sit in your lap a little while?"

"Yes, darling, come along."

And a little figure in a white night-dress came and rested lovingly in my arms, while my tears fell on the soft cheeks pressed against my own.

"What makes you cry so, mamma? I saw you crying at the theatre to-night, when old Rip Van Winkle went away and left his little children. I almost cried too, I felt so sorry for him. If I had been his little girl, I would have just run after him and brought him back again."

"Oh, Nellie, I wish you had," I cried, passionately.

"Why, mamma? Did you really want me to run on to the stage and catch that man with those old ragged clothes?" asked the wondering child.

"No, Nellie, no. Mamma didn't think what she was saying. There, dear, shall I sing you a little song and rock you to sleep? It is time those bright eyes were closed."

Humming a soft lullaby, and gently swaying to and fro, I soon had the child fast asleep in my arms. Pressing her close to my heart, and looking down into her innocent face, I recalled the events of my life.

I was the only child of a widowed father, my mother having died a few weeks after my birth. I was proud, passionate and wilful. As my fond father had indulged my every whim, I had known no will other than my own until I met Robert Winthrop.

At nineteen I married him, solely because I loved him fondly and devotedly. I knelt with him at the marriage altar a joyous and happy bride, with no care for the present, no thought of sorrow for the future, hoping only for the truest happiness in the wedded years to come. Alas! how little we dream of what lies in store for us.

I think Robert loved me well and truly, but he was selfish and exacting, and never dreamed of giving up the habits he had formed in his bachelor days, in order to promote my happiness. I didn't see this at first, or, if I did, made excuses for it. I was completely wrapped up in my husband, and seemed to have lost all will of my own.

If I wore a ribbon the colour of which he disapproved, I immediately took it off. If I had a friend he did not like, I straightway cut her acquaintance. Not so with him. He clung to his old associates as faithfully as ever, and often stayed out until long after midnight at the "club."

Sometimes I could see he had been drinking too freely. I grew fiercely jealous of his companions, and tried various arts to keep them apart. Sometimes I remonstrated with him; but it always ended in my throwing my arms around his neck and begging him to love me again, telling him I didn't mean to scold him, that I could not live if he was cross with me, etc., which proceeding, I must confess, was not a wise one, as it gave him altogether too high an idea of the influence he had over me, and was a direct confession of the bondage under which I was held.

Things continued in this manner for a year or more, when, from the mysterious unknown, there came a voice which softly whispered of a little birdling that was coming to nestle in our hearts. Then indeed Robert grew very anxious about me, very tender; and, feeling his protecting care about me, I grew happy and content.

Thus, with hearts of love and hope, we awaited the coming of our little one. She came at length one bright June day, bringing joy and gladness with her. When Robert laid her tenderly in my arms and whispered, "I have her and you now, Gretchen," I felt supremely blest.

However, this state of things did not last long. Baby grew to be an old story with Robert. He complained of my devotion to her; said I took no thought for his comfort any more; he couldn't have any peace in his own house, because everything was turned upside down for baby.

So he stayed out late at the club, drank deeply, and was cross and irritable in consequence. Now, indeed, I found my will, the loss of which I had lamented. I talked to him, gently at first, and tried to make him see how he was ruining himself and preparing misery for baby and me. Then, as he paid no attention to it, I grew angry and upbraided him for his conduct.

Our quarrels grew more and more frequent, until at length, one evening, things reached a climax. I had been grieving more than common over the kind of life we were living, and, bitterly repenting some hasty words I had said

to Robert in the morning, I determined to make amends by trying to have everything pleasant upon his return in the evening.

I resolved, as, alas! I had often done before, that let him say or do what he might I would make no comment, for, as I wisely said, "he can't quarrel alone." With these and many other good resolutions in view, I opened the long neglected piano and practised all the forenoon upon some of his favourite airs.

I then went into the kitchen, and, with my own hands, made some cakes for tea of which he was particularly fond. I dressed Baby Nellie in her prettiest dress, made my own toilet in as becoming a manner as possible, and sat down to await his coming.

I did not wait long, for I had just seated myself and taken up a piece of light work, when I heard his well known step upon the walk. I arose, intending to meet him with a smile and a kiss, but he gave me no opportunity. Hastily entering the door, he kicked the mat half way across the room, and, without noticing either Nellie or me, threw himself heavily upon a sofa.

I saw at a glance he was the worse for liquor, but, remembering my wise resolution of making no comments, I went to the piano and began an air which I had often played for him in the happy days of our courtship. Before I had half finished, he picked up his hat and remarked that if he could not get any supper at home, he might as well go where he could.

"Why, Robert," I said, "supper is almost ready, and I have made some of those cakes you like so well."

"Well, you can eat them without me, I suppose," he answered, sulkily, still keeping his hat in his hand.

"Please, Robert," I replied, at the same time laying my hand upon his arm, "don't go. Stay and have some of my cakes. I know they are nice. I am sorry I was cross this morning. I won't be so any more. Stay at home this evening, and we will have a game at cards and some music, and try to be like we used to be."

"This is a pretty time to talk of trying to be as we used! Whose fault is it that we live the way we do, I should like to know? You have made a perfect hell of our home with your murmurs and complaints; now you can take the consequences. It's little I shall do to try and make things as they used to be now."

"Robert Winthrop," I said, trembling with grief, anger and wounded pride at the injustice of this speech, for although my conscience was not entirely clear, I knew he was, by far, the greater culprit. "Robert Winthrop, if you leave here to-night, and go back to your drunken companions and their disgraceful revels, you need not return. This house is mine—the gift of my dear old father, who, thank Heaven! is not alive to witness his daughter's disgrace; and, after expressing your determination in the very choice language you have to-night, there will scarcely be room enough for both of us within these walls."

"Perhaps it is as well we part, Gretchen," he answered in a low voice, and entirely softened. Going up to Nellie, he said, "Kiss papa good-bye."

She put up her little mouth for a kiss. "Papa love Nellie?" she lisped.

He wiped away a tear, then turned toward me as if he waited for me to speak. I would not, and, after waiting for a moment, he walked quietly out of the house. In my anger I let him go without a word, or without making a single effort to retain him. Heaven only knows how I have suffered since, and how bitterly I have repented of my silence.

It is five years to-night since he went away, and I have never seen him since. I stayed at my old home three years, hoping against hope for his return. I could endure it no longer, and two years ago I came to Bradford, with the avowed purpose of teaching music, but, in reality, because away down in my heart lay a faint hope that, among the vast sea of human beings who throng this town, my truant husband might have drifted.

I have been here two years now, and each day the hope grows fainter. Heigho! The town clock struck twelve. I tenderly carried Nellie to bed, and laid her down upon it. I then turned the gas down—gas is used almost exclusively at Bradford, both for light and fuel—preparatory to retiring myself, when a sharp, quick knock at the door startled me. Who could be calling at my lodging at this late hour? I had but to open the door and the question would be solved; so I plucked up courage and turned the knob.

"Doctor Greyson!" I exclaimed.

Now the doctor was one of the leading physicians at Bradford; a grave, quiet bachelor of thirty-five or forty; he was, moreover, my best patron, having given me his sister to teach and secured me half a dozen other pupils, besides taking especial pains to recommend me. I liked him exceedingly, and, whenever I met him, which happened quite often, chatted freely and unreservedly with him.

Lately I had sometimes fancied his manner toward me was a little warmer than mere friendship warranted, and had felt a little shy of him in consequence. I had hoped I was mistaken, however. I must confess I was a good deal surprised at this late visit, while the doctor looked equally bewildered.

"Mrs. Wilbur"—I had assumed my maiden name upon coming to Bradford—"is it possible? There must be some mistake. Where is Brown?" he stammered at length.

"I'm sure I don't know," I answered, mischievously, for I understood the situation at once. "Perhaps if you had glanced at the paper stuck on that part below, you might have obtained a clue to his whereabouts."

"True enough. You see I have been away for a couple of weeks, and have but just returned. Having in my possession some legal documents which I wished to place in the care of my attorney, I repaired to his headquarters the first thing. Lo and behold, I find his smoky den transformed, as by magic, into—"

"Into the lodgings of a poor music teacher," I interrupted. "Such transformations are not uncommon at Bradford."

"Pardon me, Mrs. Wilbur," he replied, in a grave tone, and taking no notice of my interruption. "Are not these rooms rather too public for—to be desirable?" he added, after a moment's hesitation.

"I understand you, Dr. Greyson. You think these rooms altogether too much exposed for an unprotected woman in a town like Bradford. Thanking you for the suggestion, I will say, I have always held to the opinion that a woman who respects herself will universally command the respect of all classes of men, even those of the lowest order, and I have yet to find occasion for changing that belief. Beside," I added, somewhat disdainfully, "a woman who earns her own living is not expected to be too particular as to the locality where she dwells. Last, I had no choice. I was obliged to leave the rooms I had been occupying, and these were the only ones I could procure."

"You have certainly given reasons enough to convince me of the advisability of your taking them," laughed the doctor. "Still," he added, tenderly, "you are so little and delicate to be tossed about in this rude manner. You don't seem fitted for the life you live. You were made to be loved," he whispered, at the same time placing his hand on my shoulder and drawing me toward him.

"What I was made for is a query I never could solve myself," I replied. "Indeed, I sometimes wonder why I was made at all. One thing is certain," I added, in a lighter tone, "I shall be made a subject for gossip by those two old maids across the way, if you stay here much longer at this time of night."

"Indeed you will," he replied. "Forgive me. I had forgotten the lateness of the hour. I had forgotten everything but you, Gretchen, for I love you, my darling, I love you!"

The next moment he was gone. I closed the door upon him with mingled feelings of grief

and joy. Joy, however, was uppermost. It is so sweet to be loved, even when we know we have no right to accept of it, and have none to give in return.

I really don't think it is so much to love, with a woman, as it is to be loved. That is what she is for ever craving. My conscience smote me for the deceit I had practised toward Dr. Greyson. He supposed me free, and thought I had a right to accept of his attentions.

Three years after Robert left me I found my resources for living nearly exhausted, and found that henceforth I should be obliged to earn the food for my wife and child. As I had received an excellent musical education, I resolved to use that as a means for doing it.

I rented my house and came to Bradford, because I thought it would be a good place to get a class in music, and also because I entertained a secret hope of meeting my husband there.

When I came I took my maiden name and advertised myself as a widow; not with the expectation of making conquests, but simply because I knew that to obtain pupils in music, if it were known my husband had left me, would be next to impossible.

Had I been a man this circumstance would not have made the slightest difference; but what mother would hire a woman to instruct her daughters unless she be above suspicion? That I had a husband, and he did not live with me looked, I well knew, somewhat suspicious, and would, I felt quite certain, prove a great hindrance to my success, if it did not incur an entire failure. I therefore determined to say that I had no husband.

In thinking this over, after Dr. Greyson's departure, I blamed myself for having taken this course. Then, as we never like to blame ourselves for anything, I began to hunt for some other place whereon to lay the blame; felt very bitter toward the world in general, and less inclined than ever to accept the terms society enforce upon women.

"Why," I thought, "if one has a spark of honour, pride, ambition or independence, it is a great curse to be a woman. Yet it is also very sweet, sometimes," I added, as I thought of the doctor's tender words.

Then I fell to dreaming of what life might be with a man like him, strong and tender and true. One would be sure of rest, thought, and that would be so welcome. Why should I not take it? How did I know my husband was alive? If he was, I, in all probability, would never see him; and, oh, I was so wearied with this continual struggles for bread.

"For shame, Gretchen Winthrop!" whispered a voice deep down in my heart. "Have you so soon forgotten the husband you professed to love? Are you so fickle as to wish for every man who gives you a tender look or word? Would you dare enter an honest man's home with a lie upon your soul? Think you that would bring the rest you crave?"

I kissed my child that night with a feeling akin to guilt, and when I lay down by her side the grey dawn was breaking; but I had fully resolved to tell Dr. Greyson the truth.

A week passed away, and the doctor had not called, nor had I seen him during the time. I began to think I had been a little hasty in my conclusions; that those few tender words he had spoken were called forth by time and place, and had since been forgotten. I felt piqued and rather foolish, after my heroic resolves in regard to my duty.

I sat musing upon this one afternoon, while my fingers were busily engaged trimming a dress for Nellie, who was building a church with some blocks. She was having a great deal of trouble to keep the blocks in an upright position.

"Mamma, you build the steeple," she exclaimed at length. "I can't make it stay."

I had just stooped down upon the carpet to arrange the refractory steeple, when a merry voice exclaimed:

"Ha, ha! So that is your boasted industry?" and Dr. Greyson's sister, Cora, walked into the room.

Cora Greyson was a beautiful girl of twenty, tall and well proportioned, with large black eyes, sparkling with life and animation, a creamy complexion, full red lips, and teeth like pearls. Her dark hair waved low over her forehead, and was carelessly gathered with a comb in a single knot at the back of her head. Cora was kind-hearted and agreeable, full of life and fun, careless of consequences, and inclined to be fast.

"Well, I declare, Mrs. Wilbur," she exclaimed, "you have turned that old lawyer's den into a regular paradise, with your pictures and flowers and birds. The means of entrance is unsafe, however. Take my word for it, you will break your neck some day ascending that rickety flight of stairs. I should certainly discontinue the use of them. If they won't build some better ones, substitute a rope and pulley. I'm to be packed off next week, going back to London bag and baggage. Isn't it a shame, just as I have got acquainted with such a jolly set and am having such a grand time? However, Grey says Bradford is ruining me (between ourselves, I don't think all the blame ought to rest on Bradford), and that I shan't stay here any longer. I am going to make the most of my few remaining days, and have made arrangements for a leap year party to come off to-morrow night. White is to get up the supper. Now what I want is you to play for us. Cannon with his violin, Ruby with his flute, and you at the piano, just make capital music. It will give you quite a chance to show your talent. What do you say?"

I could see no objection except not knowing what to do with Nellie. Cora smiled that by saying she could come to her rooms and stay with Susan Baker, who was going to remain there during Cora's absence. Everything being arranged to her satisfaction, she arose to go.

"You see," she remarked, "I am bent upon captivating a certain naughty gentleman, who, I must own, has thus far remained insensible to my charms."

"Who in the world could resist them?" I laughingly asked.

"A very ill-mannered person, of course," answered Cora. "One who bears the name of Winthrop. Almost a stranger in these parts, and a great friend of Grey's. What is the matter that you are turning pale? Have you also met him, and lost your precious little heart?"

"Nonsense, Cora!" I replied. "How can you be so absurd? I have never met your Mr. Winthrop, at the same time trying to recover my composure, which the mention of that name had upset."

"I don't know whether to believe you or not, you are such a sly puss. However, time will tell. Now I'm off. Good-bye! Take my advice about the stairs," she called back merrily.

In another moment she had turned a corner and was out of sight. I was in a tumult of doubt and expectation the remainder of that day and the next. In vain I tried to calm myself.

Because Cora had met a Mr. Winthrop it was no sign he was my husband, I reasoned. There might be a dozen of that name in the city and none of them be he. Still I was restless and uneasy—could neither eat nor sleep, and waited with feverish anxiety for the night of the dance.

It came at length. I took extra trouble with my dress; went to considerable expense for flowers, lace, etc. When I had completed my toilet, I flattered myself I looked unusually well. Upon entering the room and seating myself at the piano, I determined to play as I had never played before.

I think I succeeded. The violin and flute seemed to catch at the inspiration, and take up their parts with an entire abandonment of the melody before them. I soon saw the pleased

expression of the dancers as they glided around the room to the dreamy rhythm of the waltz or promenade back and forth in the stately quadrille.

Cora Greyson was among the brightest and gayest; brilliantly beautiful, and, without doubt, the belle of the evening. I searched the face of each gentleman as he passed, expecting to discover Robert's familiar countenance. I was just chiding myself for my foolish fancies, when I heard Cora exclaim:

"Mr. Winthrop, bring my shawl, please. I shall take cold with nothing over my shoulders after getting so heated."

My heart gave a great bound as a gentleman carefully, even tenderly, laid a bright woollen shawl over her beautiful shoulders. Just then supper was announced, and, as he turned to give her his arm, I stood face to face with my husband! He did not recognise me, or at least did not appear to do so. Cora gave me a merry little nod as she passed as much as to say:

"You see I have him captivated at last."

This, then, was the meeting I had hoped and dreamed of for five years! This the reunion I had looked forward to. I don't think I ever felt so utterly deserted and alone in my whole life as at that moment.

"Mrs. Wilbur, shall I take you into supper?" said the kind voice of Dr. Greyson at my side.

"Please take me home, doctor," I replied. "I do not want any supper."

"Of course I will take you home if you wish it. What is the matter? You look very pale. Are you ill? It was very thoughtless in Cora to ask you to play here to-night."

"It did not hurt me. But I am so tired! I want to go home. I wish I was dead!" I added, passionately.

The doctor made no reply, but, bringing my hat and cloak, I hurried them on, and taking his arm we were soon in the street, on our way to my rooms. We walked the distance in silence, and with a kindly pressure of the hand he was about to leave me at my door, when I exclaimed with desperate determination:

"Come in, please. I have something I must and will tell you."

"Little one," he replied, as we entered the room together, at the same time placing his hand on my head and tenderly smoothing back my hair, "I am going to ask for a husband's right to share your confidence."

"Oh, doctor," I cried, with a shudder, "please don't. You must not talk like that."

"Why not?" he asked with a smile, bending down to kiss me.

"Because you must not," I replied, evading the kiss. "I ought not to listen to you. I know you will despise me; I am sure I quite despise myself. Oh, dear, I am so very unhappy. I never meant you should talk like this. Please do forgive me. But—I must tell you—you must know that your friend, Robert Winthrop, is my husband, whom I have seen to-night for the first time in five years."

It was over. I had told him.

"Gretchen Wilbur, or Winthrop, do you speak the truth?" demanded the doctor in a stern voice, with a face white as my own.

"I do," I answered, "as Heaven is my witness."

"How could that innocent face of yours hide so much deceit? I had dreamed you were so different from other women—so much nobler and better. When I saw how uncomplainingly you toiled day after day, far beyond your strength, my heart was filled with a great pity for you, out of which grew the tenderest love man ever felt for woman."

"Oh, pray have a little mercy!" I cried, between my sobs. "How was I to know this would happen? Do you suppose I had no motive for the deception I practised, except to give you pain? Could I see my baby want for food? You ought to know, as well as I, it is no easy thing for a woman to take care of herself even at the best. What do you suppose society, which barely tolerates a woman who is obliged to work, would do with a discarded wife? How many pupils, thank you, I should have to-day if it became known my husband had left

me? Hear me before you judge me so harshly."

And I repeated to him the story with which the reader is already familiar. He listened patiently until I had finished, and then replied sadly:

"I can't blame you so much, Gretchen. You might have told me, however. You knew I never would betray you, and you must have seen how very dear you were to me."

"I did begin to see it," I answered, in hurried tones and with heightened colour, "but the vision was so bright I hadn't the courage to dispel it."

"What do you mean, Gretchen?" asked the doctor, eagerly, seizing both my hands.

"I mean, Dr. Greyson," I answered, sadly, determined to take away all humiliation he may have felt at my conduct, "when we part to-night, all the sorrow will not lie upon your heart."

"Oh, my darling," he cried, as his strong frame trembled with the weight of suppressed passion, "you must, you shall be mine! Robert Winthrop cannot love you as I love you, or he would not have left you. What need have we to part? The world is wide."

And clasping me in his arms, he kissed me again and again.

"The world is not wide enough to hold two guilty souls," I replied, releasing myself from his embrace, "nor will love ever thrive when nourished upon sin. In a few years we should learn to hate each other, and loathe the bonds which bound us together. For this reason, if no other, we must go our separate ways."

The moon shone down upon the white, pained face of Dr. Greyson, as he bade me good-bye that night, while my own was wet with bitter tears of grief, sorrow, and remorse.

Robert was seated in an easy-chair in my room, with Nellie perched upon his knee, while I sat in a low chair beside them. Nellie was perfectly charmed to have found her father, and Robert was contented and happy only when she was with him.

"I am just as good as Carrie Chase is now; I have got a papa," she said.

"Poor child," answered Robert. "You ought always to have had a papa. I sometimes wonder, Gretchen," he added, turning toward me, "if you can ever forgive me for the contemptible part which I have acted."

"We have both much to forgive, dear Robert," I answered, in a low tone; "but we will let the past rest, and we will begin the future with brighter hopes and better aims."

"Indeed we will. I have been thinking, dear, we should go back to our old home. What say you?"

"I should like it above all things," I replied.

So it was settled. As I looked at Nellie's happy face, and saw Robert's peaceful countenance, I felt supremely thankful that, in my sorrow and great need of love, I was nevertheless enabled to resist temptation.

Although my every thought is loyal to my husband, and I have no wish to be otherwise than I am, I don't think the void occasioned by that five years' separation will ever be quite filled. I also feel that in my heart there will always be one tender little spot which does not belong to Robert.

DAINTY EATERS.

A MENAGERIE elephant eats about one hundred pounds of the best timothy hay every twenty-four hours. Giraffes, camels, zebras, and deer are also hay-eating animals, but are not so particular in reference to its quality as the elephant. Senlons have to be fed on fish, usually fresh and salt mackerel, each animal taking twelve or fifteen to each meal twice a day, and consuming altogether one hundred pounds of fish daily. Next in point of delicate livers come the polar bear, whose regular diet is bread soaked in milk,

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with fish now and then for a change. The black bears are also given bread, one hundred pounds being used daily. Vegetables of almost every sort are fed liberally to the different animals—cabbage, potatoes, carrots, onions, and turnips. The elephants are great cabbage eaters, in addition to their standard diet, hay. The giraffes, singularly enough, are great onion eaters, while the deer and goats, and animals of the cow species, eat carrots and turnips and potatoes. Bran and oats and corn are also liberally distributed—mostly ones or twice a week—among the hay-eating animals. But the orang-outang is the most dainty feeder of all, living on bread and honey, beef and potatoes—a diet alarmingly like that of humanity.

FACETIÆ.

OFF HIS PERCH.

MASTER (who has been carefully explaining the use of the "hyphen"): "Now, boys, here I have written the compound word, 'Bird's-nest.' What is the use of this bar in the middle?"

CHEVYER BOY: "Please, sir, for the birds to roost on, sir!" —Fun.

A "JAM."

ENGLISH COOK: "Have you any Welsh names for jelly?"

WELSH COACHMAN: "Yes, jelly!" —Fun.

BEFORE IT ALTOGETHER.

VICAR (on his rounds, to Radical shoemaker, in deprecation of personal avarice): "As we know, Mr. Wackend, the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."

R. S.: "Aye, aye, an' it's him so too long. But things 'll be different now." —Judy.

MORE MATRIMONY.

"PA, dear," said the youthful Miss Penhecker, "what articles of apparel do husband and wife sometimes represent?"

Mr. Penhecker "gave it up."

"Well, pa, dear," said the youthful Miss P., "a muff and a comforter; the husband, you know, is the muff, the wife the comforter."

Mr. Penhecker "thought it out," seriously." —Judy.

CHEAP WINE CHEAT.

(Scene: "The public-house of the future. Tom, Dick, and Harry imbibing. Enter Bill.)

BILL: "Arr o' Pommery, miss, please. (Sees Tom.) 'Uho! you 'ere? Wot'll you 'ave?"

TOM: "Thanks; I ain't done what I'm drinkin' yet. Prime stuff this ere Shater Margo. 'Ad three toos of it since I come in."

DICK: "Oh, Shatter be 'anged! There ain't no strength in it. (To barmaid.) Same again of Amontylaydo, my dear. There ain't nothing to beat Amontylaydo, unless it's Lachryma Christy, which I don't altogether 'old with, cos it sets acid."

HARRY: "G'on with yer Lachryma Christy! Don't b'lieve you ever had none. It don't run to anything above fourpence a pot with you, my boy."

DICK: "Oh, don't it? I'll bet yer Clickers round on it."

HARRY: "Not me. Who's to pay if you lose? You ain't got the price o' half a quatern o' Green Chatrouse about yer, let alone Clickers round."

(They fight. Landlord, who is serving a little girl with supper-claret in her own jug, jumps over bar, and quells disturbance as scene closes in.)

A SWEEP'S "TAKES."—A Ramonour's trade returns. —Fanny Folks.

AFFILIATING AN EMBEL.

(Pilcox, a promising young pharmaceutical chemist, has modelled from memory an heroic group, in which Mrs. Cinabue Brown is represented as the muse of this century, crowning

Postlewaite and Maudie as the twin gods of its poetry and art.)

POSTLEWAITE: "No loftiah theme has evah employed the sculptah's chisel!"

MAUDIE: "Distinctly so. Only work on in this reverent spirit, Mr. Pilcox, and you will achieve the truly great!"

Mrs. CINABUE BROWN: "Nay, you have achieved it! Oh, my young friend, do you not know that you are a heaven-born genius?"

POOR PILCOX: "I do." (Gives up his pestle and mortar, and becomes a hopeless nincompoop for life. —Punch.

GET OUT!

TALK of swallowing a peck of dirt, why, what of that? There is an old lady of Mrs. J.'s acquaintance who in her lifetime has consumed a whole half-hundred of coals. —Judy.

WAITING FOR THE HUSBAND'S BOAT.

FIRST FOND LITTLE WIFE: "My dear, how very sad you do look."

SECOND WIFE: "Sad? Nonsense! You don't look so very joyful." —Judy.

CONSCIENTIOUS.

BUS CONDUCTOR (declining a tract which was offered him with his fare): "Very much obliged, mum, but we ain't allowed to take any perquisites whatever, mum!" —Punch.

HOW CAN A WOMAN TELL?

He told me his love this morning,
With his dear hand clasping mine,
And he said "Godspeed the dawning
When, sweet, I call thee mine."
But my fond heart questioned softly,
Though loving him true and well,
Will his love outlive all changes?
Ah! how can a woman tell?

When the years shall bring their trials,
And the cares and the pains out-
weigh

The joys, in the little household,
As clouds might obscure the day,
Will the hand that has held mine
fondly,

When maidenly ills befall,
As earnestly shield from sorrow?
Ah! how can a woman tell?

When the silvery threads are creeping,
Through my tresses one by one;
When I lose my youth and beauty,
As many a wife has done;

Will his heart be mine as truly
As when in the flowery dell
He gave me his trusted promise?
Ah! how can a woman tell?

I glance at my sweetheart waiting,
His eyes they are clear and true;
"I will love him," my heart says,
gladly,

"I will trust him the wide world
through."

I will be to him joy and comfort,
I will all other wives excel,
I will keep him with love's true
magic—

This much may a woman tell! M. A. K.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PICKLED OYSTERS.—This is a very excellent and old receipt. Strain the liquor off the oyster and put it on to boil; after it has boiled add the oysters; let them boil slightly; take them out of the liquor with a strainer and put them in a pan with cold water; strain the liquor, put in with one hundred oysters, two teaspoonfuls of cloves; let it boil again, then take the oysters out of the water, put them in a tureen,

salt and pepper them—very little of the latter—and when the liquor boils pour it over the oysters; cover them; when cold add very little vinegar, or to taste. These can be used as soon as cold, or can be kept for several days, and be just as good.

BOILED HAM.—Wash the ham thoroughly and let it soak in plenty of water, mixed with one pint of yeast, over night; boil fresh water, add one pint of yeast, and put in the ham to boil slowly; a wisp of new hay put into the bottom of the kettle mellows the taste and keeps it from being burned.

WALNUT CAKE.—One pound of flour, one pound of sugar, three-quarters of a pound of butter, one and one-half pounds of raisins, one nutmeg, six eggs, one wineglassfull of wine, two quarts of walnuts, (before cracked); take in a quick oven.

LOBSTER CROQUETTES.—Mince the flesh of a lobster to the size of small dice, season with pepper, salt, spices, and as much cayenne as will rest on the point of a trussing needle. Melt a piece of butter in a saucepan, mix with it a table-spoonful of flour; then the lobster and some chopped parsley; moisten with a little fish stock until the mixture looks like minced veal; then stir into it off the fire a couple of yolks of eggs, and put it by to get cold. When nearly so shape it into the form of coris, egg them, and roll them in baked bread-crumbs. After the lapse of an hour egg and bread-crumbs them again, taking care to preserve the shape. After a little time fry them a nice colour in hot lard.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A LAFRANKEE will make three good meals of a tub of oleomargarine, his wife will take the hoops for a crinoline, and the boys will use the staves for snow-shoes. So you see, children, how a little oil will smooth the rugged edges of life's pathway.

A GERMAN has (he asserts) discovered a method of extracting the soul of man or beast, and making it into a paste with glycerine, administer doses, graduated according to circumstances, so that he can make a coward brave, or a hero a pooltrou at will.

"THE more shirtee 'Merican man get washee, more money Chinaman makee," is the way an almond-eyed Philadelphia laundryman translates "Cleanliness is next to godliness."

ALTHOUGH the abolition of flogging in her Majesty's fleet cannot become for some time a statutory fact, yet flogging in the navy to all intents and purposes is abolished, and it is understood by captains of ships that any seaman convicted by court-martial of offences punishable by the lash is to be subjected to another form of punishment. An intimation to this effect has been sent out from the Admiralty within the last few days.

PRINCE ALBERT VICTOR of Wales is to undergo the usual course of training as a cadet at the Royal Military Academy, and it is the wish of the Prince of Wales that, when qualified, an active commission in the army shall be given to him.

THE new Post-Office-Order notes, which, beginning at a shilling, for which the charge is a halfpenny, go on up to £2, is to come into force on the 1st of October. It is expected that not only will it prove an immense convenience, but also a considerable source of revenue, as the risk of small remittances will now be reduced to a minimum.

A YOUNG man has had a woman's tooth grafted into his jaw, and now every time he passes a millinery shop that tooth fairly aches to drag him up to the window.

"My wife," remarked a prominent manufacturer, "never attends auctions. She went once, and seeing a friend at the opposite side of the room, nodded politely, whereupon the auctioneer knocked down a patent cradle, and asked her where she wished it delivered."

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NED.—Catarrh is often cured by simply snuffing up the nose occasionally a little table salt.

ROSAWOLD K.—See No. 896.

W. R.—Clarinet makers: John Ford, 159, Devonshire Street, Cambridge Road, E.; Joseph Wallis, 133, Euston Road, N.W.

WHITE ROSE.—You say you are in love with a young lady, but dare not speak to her. Really, it would not be advisable to ask us or any other gentleman to make love for you. If you are so very shy write a declaration of love to the lady.

N. E. R.—Having committed yourself so gravely, there are only two courses for you to adopt. The most worldly one would be to ignore No. 1 entirely, and treat as slander anything he might say; but the wisest course, in our opinion, would be to acquaint your mother or father with the circumstances, and be guided by her or his advice.

CECILE S.—Your advertisement dated from Cape Town was inserted in due course, but, we believe, was not responded to.

A. D.—To remove sun freckles, make a lotion composed of chloride of ammonium, one drachm; spring water, one pint; lavender water, two drachms; apply with a sponge two or three times a day.

J. F.—The following is a good receipt: Sulphur, forty-five grains; acetate of lead, twenty grains; glycerine, half an ounce; water, ten ounces; mix. Rub on night and morning with a sponge, and the hair should be well brushed afterwards.

ANNIE.—An advertisement in one of the daily papers might prove of service to you. Your handwriting is quite good enough, and would probably give satisfaction.

AUGUSTUS.—We know of no biography of the person mentioned.

MARY.—Unless you do yourself an injustice in stating the case, you attempted to deceive your husband in a matter about which you knew he had a good deal of feeling. It was natural for him to be indignant at what you had done. You should remember the old lines:

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive!"

SUSAN.—It would make no difference to what port or from what port the vessel was sailing. Your child would be entitled to the same rights of citizenship as though it were born at home. The wife of your sister-in-law's brother would not be a relative of yours.

CAOUTCHOUC.—1. A cable's length is the length of a ship's cable, usually 120 fathoms, or 720 feet. A knot is a division of the log line, serving to measure the rate of a vessel's motion. The number of knots which run off from the reel in half a minute shows the number of miles a vessel sails in an hour. Hence, when a vessel goes eight miles an hour she is said to go eight knots. 2. A league in England is equal to three geographical miles. The German league contains four geographical miles.

T. W. H.—The name of the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary is Franz Joseph I.; King of Denmark, Christian IX.; King of Belgium, Leopold II.; Emperor of Germany, Wilhelm I.; King of Bavaria, Ludwig II.; King of Wurtemberg, Karl I.; Emperor of Russia, Alexander II.; King of Saxony, Albert I.; King of Italy, Humbert I.; King of Spain, Alfonso XII.; King of Sweden and Norway, Oscar II.; King of Greece, George I.; King of Portugal, Louis I.; Sultan of Turkey, Abdul-Hamid II.; President of France, Francois Paul Jules Grevy.

BOSSA FIDE.—We object, on principle, to crushing out any honest love that fills the heart to overflowing, and we are surprised that a man of your resources does not see an alternative. The lady may decline your offer; or she may engage herself to you, though not wish to leave her mother for two or three years; or she may accept you and approve your ambition, and you may put your heads together and devise some way of carrying out the objects of which both approve, without any serious inconvenience; or she may marry you and help you in conquering your troubles and achieving your ambition. We do not, therefore, see any absolute necessity for dropping the law studying or dropping the lady.

MARGUERITE and BLUSH ROSE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Marguerite is twenty-three, fair, blue eyes, tall. Blush Rose is eighteen, brown eyes, medium height, dark, of a loving disposition. Respondents must be between twenty-two and twenty-five, good-looking, of a loving disposition, tall.

D. W. D. and M. K. T., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. D. W. D. is twenty-three, medium height, dark, loving, brown hair and eyes, fond of home and music. M. K. T. is twenty-one, fond of music and dancing, loving, dark, brown hair and eyes, tall.

THE COMPLAINING ONE.

ONE day, amid the din and noisy clash
Of yonder forge, whose hammers ceaseless clash,
Whose rolling fires flame in their awful glow
And fearful rage, as attending "Cyclops" throw
Into their fiery depths the helpless ore—
Those fiery depths that with such horror roar—
One day was heard a plaintive cry and moan
From one large piece of ore, which had been
thrown

In haste aside, and scarce its presence known.
The master heard the strange and sad comment;
In deep attention soon his ear was bent.

"Oh, master, I am weary with lying here,
Uncouth and rude, as still I must appear
To all who chance my rugged form to see,
With not one charm for those who gaze on me.
As here I view my low and abject state
How cruel seems my harsh and bitter fate;
Compelled this humble place to keep, and pine
In sloth and rust, yet with the power to shine
Forth on the world in deeds as great and rare
As brightest steel did ever hope or dare.
Oh, master, I would be a two-edged sword,
That in the warrior's hands would flash, and to-
wards

Which all should gaze, while still with blows of
might
I should cut down the wrong, protect the right,
Flash on the world the ever-glorious rays
Of light and truth, and in their golden blaze
Roll back the shades of error and of wrong,
Which o'er the world their sway have held so
long."

"Thy wish be granted thee," the master said,
And straightway in the fierce and fiery bed
Of glowing furnace, in its awful blast
Of melting heat, the pining ore he cast,
From which came forth at once the piercing cry,
"Oh, master, save me, save me, or I die!
Not this, my master! Oh, I meant not this!
These flames like serpents' tongues around me
hiss!
Oh, from the tortures of these rolling fires
Save me—oh, save, ere yet my soul expires!
Restore me to my former humble lot;
Though low its state, yet will I murmur not,
Nor will again to lofty hopes aspire,
If safe removed from torments of this fire."

"Peace, be still!" the master's voice exclaims.
"A two-edged sword, whose blade with lightning
flames,
Before whose flash shall wrong and error flee,
And light and truth awake—such wouldst thou
be.
And such thou shalt; 'mid all this fiery pain
Leads on the way by which that state to gain,
And only through these ever-burning fires
Canst thou attain to all thy fond desires.
These rolling flames, that madly round thee toss
And fiercely burn, shall purge away thy dross,
And shall remove thy deepest earthly stains,
And purify the steel that still remains.
When in the furnace's fervid, glowing heat
Thine hour is past, then when you hammers beat
Shalt thou proceed, and, 'neath their awful
blows,
Crushed thou shalt be, yet find, 'mid all thy
woes,
Sustaining power thy deepest pangs to bear,
Though faith and hope seem sunk in dark de-
spair.
Though crushed thy form, yet still shalt thou be
borne
To yonder grinding wheels, where racked and
torn
Thou still shalt be, until, from all this pain
And fiery anguish, thou shalt at length attain
The form and beauty that thy wish desired—
The temper, strength, in two-edged sword re-
quired."

The moral by this simple fable taught
Will plain appear upon a moment's thought.

C. H. B.

S. S. and C. W., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. S. S. is twenty-three, light hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition. C. W. is twenty-three, dark hair, hazel eyes, and loving. Respondents must be fond of home and children, good-looking.

DANIEL, twenty-three, medium height, dark, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be good-looking, fond of music, tall, of a loving disposition.

W. D., twenty-five, fair, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondents must be about twenty, good-looking, dark, fond of music.

EDWIN C., twenty-one, grey eyes, dark, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady. Respondent must be about nineteen, good-looking, tall, loving.

O. P. G., twenty-two, brown hair, hazel eyes, medium height, dark, fond of home and music, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen, loving, good-looking.

SAM and JOHN, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Sam is nineteen, fair, grey eyes. John is twenty, dark, good-looking. Respondents must be good-looking, of a loving disposition, fond of home and music, fair.

G. S., twenty-four, tall, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

W. N. and G. G., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. W. N. is twenty-five, medium height, of a loving disposition, fair, good-looking, fond of music. G. G. is twenty-three, fair, medium height.

AURORA and POLLY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Aurora is nineteen, fair, fond of home and music. Polly is nineteen, tall, fair, fond of home and music. Respondents must be about twenty, dark, medium height.

CORA and AMELIA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Cora is twenty-one, brown hair, dark eyes. Amelia is fair, hazel eyes, good-looking, fond of music. Respondents must be between nineteen and twenty-two, fond of home, loving.

N. D. and D. U., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. N. D. is twenty-three, medium height, handsome, brown hair, hazel eyes, fair. D. U. is twenty-one, thoroughly domesticated, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and children, fair. Respondents must be between twenty-two and twenty-five, medium height, fond of music, fair.

ELIZA and GEORGIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Eliza is twenty-one, tall, good-looking, fond of music and dancing. Georgie is twenty, fond of home and children, tall, domesticated.

MADLINE and MAUDE, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Madeline is twenty-two, of a loving disposition, fond of home, domesticated, tall, fair. Maude is nineteen, loving, tall, fond of home and children.

ELIZABETH, seventeen, fair, brown hair, hazel eyes, medium height, fond of music, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty.

CLARA and ALICE, two friends, wish to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Clara is twenty-four, tall, dark, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and children, good-looking. Alice is twenty-one, medium height, fair, light brown hair and eyes, good-looking.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

JENNIE is responded to by—Alfred, tall, dark hair, grey eyes, of a loving disposition.

CHARLES by—Emily, nineteen, dark haired eyes, of a loving disposition, and fond of home and music, medium height.

NED by—Bessie J., twenty-two, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of home.

CLARE by—Edward, eighteen, tall, dark, fond of music and dancing, loving.

JOE by—Jessie, eighteen, tall, dark.

GERALD by—Jennie, twenty-one, of a loving disposition, blue eyes, fair, tall.

GEORGE by—Annie, twenty, tall, dark, brown hair, grey eyes, and of a loving disposition.

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